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The Politics of Abortion

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Abortion has always been an emotional issue; it is only lately that it has also become party-political as well. 'Questions of conscience' are traditionally held to be outside party lines. Capital punishment crosses many boundaries; so does homosexuality, divorce or euthanasia. Abortion has now become different. Those who want to put the clock back to the pre-1967 position are in the strict sense reactionaries: it is, therefore, not surprising that their main source of strength is the Conservative Party.

Last Monday the members of the National Abortion Campaign, who generally admit to being in favour of 'abortion on request' but do not see this as their first priority, came out in support of the six Members of Parliament – four of them Labour – who want at least to support the 1967 Act and to block Mr James White's proposed amendment to it. Throughout the whole discussion, the significant phrase has been 'on social grounds', which can mean anything, depending on whether you live in Birmingham or Aberdeen. There is, too, the fantasy phrase 'abortion on demand', used by both extremes of the debate for their separate emotive purposes.

It is significant that six members of the Select Committee have, unprecedentedly, resigned. The Committee itself has, however, still a quorum. Nine remain out of 15 and those nine, given their previous voting record on the 1967 Act, are solid anti-abortionists. Were the six, then, wise to withdraw? Certainly in the context of Parliament's own rules the dice were loaded against them from the beginning. At one point, Leo Abse (a talkative member of the Select Committee, a Labour MP himself and a determined anti-abortionist) said privately that even the original selection of MPs was unrepresentative of the House as a whole, since in its original form it consisted of one woman and 14 men and that was more than 27 women MPs out of 635 were strictly entitled to. 'What,' said the pro-abortion lobby, bravely fighting Mr James White's amendment (which would effectively mean a return to back-street abortion for the desperate and a flourishing trade for well-to-do ladies

in the pecuniary range of Harley Street), 'has this to do with us? How can *men* tell?' Of course men have been making decisions affecting women as long as written records exist. What makes abortion as much a political as a moral problem is international Catholicism dismissing birth control, with the result that abortions are far more frequent in Catholic countries than elsewhere. In France, Italy, Germany – and even in the United States – it has already become a major political issue, emerging at every campaign, local or national, and discussed at length.

What has now happened here, however, is that the Lane Commission Report – a model of commonsense – has been, for political reasons, disregarded, not to say forgotten, by most MPs. So the anti-White activists (i.e., those who think the Select Committee should never have been reconvened after the last parliamentary session) have all decided to support the six MPs who resigned from the Select Committee, and have refused to give any evidence to the Committee, giving as their main reason that it would anyway be ignored. There is a great deal of medical evidence in favour of abortion which they feel has been disregarded. It is said to be safer to have an abortion, after the age of 25, than to take any form of the pill. Of course this kind of information tends to reinforce the anti-abortionists who like to put about the view that a quick abortion is a selfish decision, which might mean missing a pleasant lunch. This version of the argument is essentially class oriented. Wealthy girls who are 'promiscuous', it is said, can afford whatever it might cost and care very little about it. The truth lies elsewhere among the ageing mothers of several children who cannot cope with another one.

The NAC's plan is to use the evidence – medical and social – for easier and healthier abortions on the NHS, with full media coverage. There are dangers in such a course. The Select Committee, after all, still exists and will eventually produce its recommendations. But since abortion has become a political issue, there is no reason why it should not be handled in a socialist way.

Francis Ford

The Whitehall Conspiracy

The extraordinary advertising material published in the press last week by the Society of Civil Servants is a salutary reminder to the public that the conflict is not between the public as a whole and civil servants as a whole but between different groups in society that cut across industrial or regional or other similar classifications. In this particular case the cries of anguish by the mass of civil servants at the way they have been unfairly criticised by sections of public opinion are largely justified. The chief culprits are not the rank-and-file civil servants; they are the small elite of a thousand or so top civil servants who have little more in common with the average civil service typist or even medium-level executive officer than have directors of ICI with their typists or their medium-level accountants.

Not only would it be foolish to condemn the whole 700,000-odd civil servants for sins that have been perpetrated largely by their chiefs, but, conversely, the validity of the defence put up by the former should not be allowed to provide cover also for the latter.

For example, the Society of Civil Servants points out that the civil service average wage, at £54 per week (October 1975), was below the national average earnings of all workers, and also that during the period April 1974 to April 1975 the average wage rose by almost exactly the same amount as the national average. But, in the first place, comparisons of average wages between industries or sectors depend very much on the particular occupational mix of the labour force in each. An 'industry' in which a high proportion of, say, female clerical staff or low-paid manual workers is employed will have a relatively low average wage even if, grade for grade, the employees receive exactly the same rate as comparable grades elsewhere. This sort of comparison tells one nothing about pay at the top of the scale.

And as regards the increases in pay over the last few years or so, if it is true that, on average, civil servants have not done better than those in comparable positions outside, then somebody should take a close look at differentials within the civil service.

For the top civil servants have certainly been doing better than those in traditionally comparable occupations outside. For example, as Lord Annan, the Provost of University College London pointed out recently, under-secretaries were paid about the same as university professors a few years ago, whereas now they are paid at least 50 per cent more. If civil servants as a whole have not been doing better than the national average this implies that the dispersion within the civil service must have been growing, with the top brass increasing their lead over the rest.

If this is the case it is important that the Labour movement does not fall into the trap of condemning the public service as a whole on account of the avarice of the top echelons of the public service. For nothing is more inimical to a rational socialist policy in the longer run than the increasing resentment – if not downright hostility – that the civil service has generated over the last few years. Insofar as the Labour Party would be more likely than the Conservative Party to extend the social services or the scope of the public sector in industry it is essential that the public does not identify the whole of the public service with the well-heeled and usually arrogant coterie who run the public sector as if it exists largely to satisfy their own power-crazy egos rather than the public interest.

Unfortunately the citizens of this country



The unemployed march again

can expect little help from Mr Wilson, who seems either to adore the civil service or to be afraid of it. He has made no attempt to prevent the top brass of the civil service from resorting to the full bag of tricks to head off any serious investigation into their privileges and powers. For example, their latest ploy consists of busily conducting inquiries themselves all over the place, or ensuring that other inquiries are, in fact, dominated by the evidence that they themselves will give. This is, of course, an old technique. The Foreign Office sends round its own inspectors to check that members of overseas embassies and so on are not overspending. But most of these inspectors are presumably the usual band of officials, who for one euphemism or another – such as incompatibility or age – have to be taken off real operational activities and put out to grass in a harmless form. Many of them will have been wasting public money themselves for many years in the same way as the people they are inspecting, so they will share the same indulgent criteria of what expenditures are in the public interest. But, as everybody knows, there is always the problem of who inspects the inspectors.

Now, however, a new inquiry is being launched. By outsiders? Of course not; it will be conducted by Whitehall's own Central Policy Review Staff (the 'think tank' headed by Sir Kenneth Berrill). While Sir Kenneth is probably one of the sharpest and most independent-minded of officials the same cannot be said of all his senior staff, who would anyway not be able to dispel public fears of a Whitehall conspiracy if their inquiries are to be yet another purely internal affair.

Stage Army Inquiry

Nor can citizens rely on Parliament to protect them from the increasing power of a bureaucracy that is not responsive to the political will of the nation. For the general sub-committee of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Expenditure, which has begun an inquiry into civil service pay and conditions, is chaired by Mr Michael English, who really seems to believe that '... in the course of the evidence which will be submitted to us by government departments, the relevant trade unions and other interested members of the public, all things that concern any substantial body of opinion will come to the surface'. This committee, which is expected to complete its inquiries in the space of about nine months, consists largely of a stage army of a few MPs with virtually no back-up facilities, hardly any research staff, very little time or expertise and very little inquisitorial powers.

The outside bodies will not be in a position to delve into the facts. The committee's terms of reference are too narrow. It will be the top civil servants who appear before it (suitably flanked by middle-level colleagues in case, by some miracle, a question is relentlessly pursued to the point where actual knowledge is needed in order to answer it). And one of the two special advisers who are to be appointed to advise the committee will be – yes, you guessed correctly – a retired civil servant!

Anyway, much of the time of the committee will be spent, apparently, on the

inevitable 'information gathering' tour of foreign countries that the committee intends to carry out. Perhaps they could set an example and travel economy class for a change, instead of the normal British practice of sending senior officials first class when even Mr McNamara, the president of the World Bank, usually finds economy class adequate. (If top British officials were not allowed always to travel first class, and spend their time knocking back free champagne, they might be less eager to begin an inquiry into almost any subject under the sun by the initial overseas tour to gather information about how other countries manage their affairs. They might also be better equipped on arrival to study how the French *Cour des Comptes* carries out continuous investigations, by mainly independent experts, into public spending, or how the US Congress goes about digging into the activities of government agencies.)

In the 1960s, the Fulton Committee spent years studying the civil service, and made useful recommendations concerning the need to modernise the type of training that civil servants obtain before and during their careers. But the questions that need to be studied now are different and need to be seen in a party political light as well as in the light of the general interests of the country irrespective of which political party is in power.

It is true that an important prior question is the pay and conditions of civil servants. But a second question is the extent of the power and influence of officials. Of course, this is related to the previous issue. For, given the degree to which they have raised their pay relative to comparable occupations over the last few years, it does seem – and the *Crossman Diaries* confirm – that officials must wield far greater power over ministers and events than might have been expected by the public.

But, from a socialist point of view, an important aspect of civil service power and influence is the subtle, and probably unconscious, effect on senior civil servants of the practice by which many of them retire into the private sector. The initial leniency of the civil service over the original North Sea oil concessions – which was brought out by an earlier Select Committee on Expenditure – may have resulted not so much from lack of technical competence as from a general Whitehall philosophy of treating industry with kindness, sympathy, and even downright generosity. The tolerant attitude to the bakers' combines which have recently been discovered breaking the law for years is another instance.

It is not suggested that there is any direct

relationship – let alone a corrupt one – between the decisions that individual civil servants take and their opportunities for subsequent jobs in the business world. But an equally insidious and more harmful – because more diffused and less identifiable – form of influence could result from the view that, in general, the private sector will only be an eager market for retired top civil servants if the latter are clearly sympathetic to the aims of the private sector in general and are 'sound' chaps, judged by the criteria of soundness used in business circles.

The Fulton Committee did, in fact, consider 'The Acceptance of Business Appointments by Civil Servants', to use the name of the document submitted to it by the Treasury on this subject. This document ran to one-and-a-half pages, plus some innocuous statistics of the numbers of officials in the Scientific, Engineering and Technical Classes who had accepted outside appointments over a period of years. This was a typical example of the civil service technique of heading off awkward issues at an early stage by giving the impression that there is nothing in them even worth serious consideration.

Vast Sums Wasted

What is needed is some detailed examination of individual case histories as well as a reconsideration of the whole principle involved. There is no doubt that changes in the structure of society and the economy will require increasing government intervention of one kind or another. If socialist industrial policies are to be implemented, which will involve more and more collaboration and contacts between Whitehall and industry, there is an increased need to ensure that officials are not merely technically competent to evaluate industrial and economic problems – which is what Fulton was largely concerned with – but will also represent the public interest to the firms rather than represent the firms to the public (to paraphrase Bismarck's dictum about his ambassadors overseas).

There is a third question that is particularly important for a socialist government. This concerns the manner in which the civil service vets public expenditure – in addition to its own salaries. For left to themselves the civil servants inevitably argue that economies in public expenditure can only be made by changes in governmental policies. In other words, as concluded in the recently produced official review of the Cost of Central Government (a review carried out by – guess who? – a team of senior civil servants) there are no major economies to be made in government departments, so that public expenditure can only be reduced by abandoning some major political objectives.

For a socialist government this conclusion cannot be accepted at its face value. A Labour government has as much interest in cutting out bad public expenditure as does a Tory government; indeed, it has more. For there is likely to be a sort of Gresham's law at work, in that bad public expenditure will drive out good public expenditure. A party that sees an expanded role for 'good' public expenditure, therefore, has a greater interest in cutting out 'bad' public expenditure.

NEXT WEEK

Peter Jenkins

Harold Wilson at 60

Kingsley Amis

Words and Meanings

Maurice Peston

The Economic Philosophy
of Public Expenditure

diture. Because vast sums are wasted on account of the incompetence of officials, who waste money in thousands of small ways, the Government is under pressure to abandon major policy objectives, such as entitlement to social security to numerous deserving cases, improved public facilities, such as houses, schools, health services and so on.

And if, as their review suggests, one way of achieving economies in public expenditure might have to be 'rougher justice' in the allocation of welfare payments, it is particularly sinister that the new Ombudsman who is supposed to protect the public from maladministration by civil servants is, of course, as Leon Brittan MP pointed out in *The Times*, an ex-civil servant.

Mr English is reported to reject the conspiracy theory of the civil service. He may well be right. But if public doubts about it are to be laid to rest it will not be through a succession of internal inquiries or half-hearted amateurish investigations by his committee in between hangovers in-

duced by free gins and tonic on the flight back from Washington. What is needed is some continuous form of investigation by independent outsiders with expert knowledge and considerable powers of investigation. The ludicrous secrecy with which the British civil servants manage to conceal their activities and which goes far beyond that found in many other countries, and which only provides more *prima facie* evidence for the conspiracy theory, must be relaxed. And the outside experts must be made to understand from the outset that no knighthoods or peerages will be given for good conduct. (It would help, of course, if this whole absurd system of honours were scrapped.) If the public is to be assured that there is no Whitehall conspiracy in spite of the circumstantial evidence in its favour, and if the Labour Party is to be assured that its industrial and social policies are not to be hampered by structural weaknesses in the system, then genuine inquiries must not only be conducted but be seen to be conducted.

tunistic – merely seeking to cash in on the present mood of the people. Back in his childhood in Everett, in the State of Washington, he watched his father battle communists in the labour movement. Now of course he conducts the fight on a more spacious plane, leading the fight against the SALT agreements and détente (a word which President Ford has now promised to purge from his vocabulary), leaping up as the most vocal defender of James Schlesinger when the latter was fired, and of course presenting himself as the most militant senatorial defender of the interests of Israel.

In all of these political operations Jackson has built up the basis of a formidable constituency: business, to the extent that he helps funnel Federal money to it and eases its travails; in Congress, organised labour, since he votes with it and advocates big spending programmes: the Jewish vote, useful in Miami and vital in New York; and he even tries for the black vote, arguing that he has 'a 100-per-cent voting record on civil rights'.

And yet, at least up until the Massachusetts primary, the mix never seemed quite to work. First of all Scoop is a dull, dull, dull man. He married at the age of 49, has absolutely no interest in anything apart from work. His wife sums up their gastronomic posture by describing their virtually invariable evening meal: Campbell's tomato soup with some lumps of frozen crab meat added for flavour and excitement.

Last autumn his supporters wore the complacent smiles of men already apportioning jobs in the new Jackson Administration. But the great surge to Jackson, always pending, never seemed to take place. In the face of his negative charisma the idea of a surge, as opposed to resigned seepage, seems somewhat absurd, and indeed the Massachusetts result has, under the torpid influence of Jackson's personality, more of the look of an eddy.

Yet interest groups such as organised labour will stay with Jackson, at least until something better turns up. Labour may not be able to do much for Jackson in Florida, where Carter and Wallace will be fighting their major battle for survival, but will be important in New York. Birch Bayh was the other main claimant on labour's support, and for him the decision of the Massachusetts voters is virtually terminal. Mo Udall is now the liberal Democratic contender. At least the Massachusetts primary did that for him. But not much more. He ran behind both Jackson and Wallace.

A defeat for Udall in New York in April would mean that the three remaining serious contenders for the Democratic nomination actually running in the primaries would be Jackson, Wallace and Carter. And of course Wallace is not ultimately a serious contender either. Which leaves the Right-Centre charm of Carter and the Right-Centre bleakness of Jackson. Amid the rising frenzy of polling, leaps from one bandwagon to another, and amid general escalating hullabaloo we need not therefore despair of the thought that there will be renewed calls for the politics of joy, and the joyous politics of big government assembled in the person of Hubert Humphrey.

New York

Alexander Cockburn

A Mastiff for Massachusetts

One of the most resolute cold warriors in American politics has now managed to win a Democratic primary. In another demonstration of the vigour of right-wing ideas the Democratic candidate, Senator Henry ('Scoop') Jackson has finally succeeded in cranking the mighty engine of his presidential ambitions into motion. It was make-or-break for him in Massachusetts. Defeat by a liberal such as Mo Udall would have left Jimmy Carter in clear possession of the right-centre terrain. Defeat by George Wallace would simply have attested to the potency of crude rather than synthetic political fuel. Now all three of these conservative Democrats press on to Florida to fight it out there.

Jackson's triumph in the Massachusetts primary last Tuesday was effected by the expenditure of just under half a million dollars, an appeal to the state's important anti-bussing vote, almost as vociferous as that of Wallace, and crucially by the help of organised labour. He enjoyed such lagniappes too as an endorsement from Daniel Patrick Moynihan, now relocated in Harvard after his 'triumphs' in the United Nations.

It should not immediately be concluded that the Democratic voters of Massachusetts were responding most ardently to Jackson's thunderous denunciations of Soviet aggression and Kissingerian appeasement. Polling conducted after the ballot tended to show that such worries were not to the fore. More important was the matter of jobs, where Jackson could point to his own support for increased defence spending and to the defence industries in Massachusetts. Most important was the matter of bussing, where people ultimately reluctant to endorse Wallace perceived Jackson to be

saying the same sort of things in a marginally more tactful way.

Jackson's victory naturally comes as something of a setback for those who have been arguing that the first thing the American people want to see in this bicentennial year is a fresh face in Washington; the second is less 'big government'. Jackson's face is no stranger to Washington. In fact his ponderous body has been carrying it up and down the corridors of Congress since 1941. And Jackson is the epitome of big government. In that no-man's land where government, business and big labour struggle towards satisfactory consensus he is a commanding, influential and seemingly eternal presence.

He has been referred to as 'the Senator from Boeing', that company being based in his home state of Washington. The title is altogether too limiting. He is the main senatorial advocate of all the aerospace and defence corporations. Indeed it is thought that Eisenhower had Jackson in mind when he made his famous reference to the power of the military-industrial complex. At that time Jackson was attacking Eisenhower for being 'unwilling to face up to the real threat that America and the free countries are up against in the event Indochina should fall'. Jackson pushed keenly for American intervention, later for the bombing of Hanoi, and later still for the invasion of North Vietnam. Today he explains this posture in marvelously convoluted gobbledegook. 'I opposed moves to expand the conflict . . . my objection was "Look, don't get into a protracted conflict." Once our troops were committed, we had to give them the support so they had a chance of coming out of there.'

One would have to admit that Jackson's hostility to the Soviet Union is not oppor-

Richard Haass

Reds Under the Hatches

'Every potentate who has only ground forces has only one hand; yet whoever has a navy too has both hands.' Peter the Great, to whom this comment is attributed, was not merely theorising. With the defeat of the Swedish Navy of Charles XII by the Russian Fleet at Gangut in 1714, the reality of Russian naval might was established. And, then as today, few beyond the borders of Russia were pleased.

But between this victory some 250 years ago and the present, the Russian Navy has had more than its share of problems. The superior British and French fleets enabled these countries to humiliate Russia – despite her victories over Turkey – at the Congress of Berlin, while the Japanese decimated the Russian Fleet at Tsushima a generation later. More recently the Red Navy's contribution in the two wars versus Germany was something less than decisive.

And, as if this foreign opposition was not enough, the Russian Navy has continually suffered from the vagaries of its own political leadership. Tsars after Peter failed to share his enthusiasm for the navy, letting the fleet ignominiously decay. Then, after sailors served as the vanguard of the Revolution, Trotsky, according to Isaac Deutscher, had to talk Lenin out of dismantling the fleet because of the Kronstadt uprisings. Stalin mainly saw the admirals as but another target for his purges while Khrushchev, favouring a small navy comprised of submarines and small surface vessels, contemptuously stated that large battleships were suited for transporting heads of state and little else.

Yet, in the past decade since the fall of Khrushchev, the Soviet Navy has flourished – so much so that Margaret Thatcher and many others throughout the West view its rise to power with alarm. Clearly, the prodigious growth of this navy provides ample reason for pause – but alarm?

With Admiral of the Fleet Sergei G. Gorshkov at the helm for 20 years now (which must be a record of sorts, as his career has survived Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev), the Soviet Navy has earned for itself an independent status within the Soviet military structure. Gorshkov, the Mahan of Soviet naval power, has succeeded in convincing the powers that be that navies have played and will continue to play a major role in determining the course of history, and that by definition a Great Power is a power with a great navy. More significantly, he has altered his country's perception of itself, from a land power to a global power, and hence a naval power as well.

Admiral Gorshkov's lobbying attempts have been aided by the revolution in naval technology that has occurred in recent years. Specifically, the threat posed to Soviet security by the appearance of the nuclear-powered, nuclear-armed Polaris submarine in 1960 necessitated both a Soviet defence

and an equivalent offence. Indeed, the Polaris only increased the nuclear threat from the sea, as American aircraft carriers had for years roamed the oceans carrying bombers laden with nuclear weapons.

In addition, the Russians were forced to suffer some painful political lessons as to the benefits of seapower, and the inadequacy of a navy such as theirs modelled on the German principle of the primacy of the submarine. The American naval quarantine of Cuba in the autumn of 1962 exposed the folly of global adventurism without appropriate global capabilities, while Western operations such as Suez (1956) and Lebanon (1958) revealed the impotence of the Soviets either to prevent the landings or come to the assistance of their own clients and friends.

As a result of all this there exists today a Soviet Navy that is clearly competent and perhaps much more. With some 75 strategic submarines (mostly nuclear-powered) capable of launching 784 nuclear-tipped missiles – the most advanced of which have a range of nearly 5,000 miles – the Soviet Navy is at least the strategic equal of the United States and Great Britain, together possessing 45 nuclear submarines with 720 missiles, the latter having a shorter range but a greater number of warheads than their Soviet counterparts.

On the ocean's surface, the Soviet Fleet includes about 235 major combatants, larger in number than the US alone but less than the United States and Britain combined. It is important to note, however, that the surface contingent of the United States and Britain includes a total of 16 aircraft carriers (each with a full aircraft complement) and another ten smaller carriers, while the Soviet Fleet has only two helicopter carriers and as yet no aircraft carriers, although one is being tested and another being built. As a result, the Soviet Navy remains vulnerable to air power, and consequently cannot effectively challenge the West for control of the seas. Lastly, the number of Soviet nuclear-powered attack submarines roughly equals the combined American-British total, although the Soviets do possess a large number of conventionally-powered attack submarines that remain operational.

Parallel to this change in Soviet capabilities has come a change in naval mission and doctrine. Gone are the days when the Soviet Navy sailed off its own coasts, doing little more than supplying the army and protecting its seaward flanks. This is not to say that defence of the homeland has ceased to be the primary mission of the navy even today; rather, the nature of defence has changed owing to the nature of the offensive threat.

Thus, Soviet writings on warfare emphasise the necessity of 'forward defence' as the means of destroying the enemy's chief striking units – aircraft carriers and

strategic submarines. This task largely falls to the attack submarine force and surface units, assisted by shore-based aircraft if available. At the same time, Soviet offensive strategic submarines are ready to deliver their offensive salvoes should war erupt. Secondary wartime missions include the disrupting of enemy sea-lanes of communication (merchant shipping, convoys, tankers) while at the same time protecting Soviet sea lanes.

There are many shortcomings in this wartime scenario. The art of anti-submarine warfare (ASW) is such that the Soviets would be lucky to locate and destroy at most several submarines. For the present and foreseeable future, the submarine-based deterrent will remain virtually invincible, and any nuclear exchange would leave both sides in shambles. On the other hand, the Soviets would have a great deal of success in disrupting Western shipping during any general war. A more serious concern is the possibility of a limited, non-nuclear war, fought by submarines and surface vessels for control of the seas. Submarines would take their toll of surface ships, while mines and other devices could be employed to obstruct passage at key points such as Suez or the Straits of Hormuz at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, through which much of the world's oil passes.

Yet this concern, too, is largely a false one. No amount of superior Western naval strength could ensure protection of all shipping, nor could the obstruction of key transit points be prevented. Moreover, the Soviets themselves are becoming concerned with freedom of the seas as their own military, commercial, fishing and scientific use of the oceans develops. Finally, and most importantly, there is no guarantee that any war directly involving the super-powers will remain limited – and neither has evidenced much enthusiasm in testing the possibility.

But it is not simply the alleged wartime threat posed by the Soviet Navy that has Mrs Thatcher and others – including the Chinese – worried. The universal presence of the 'blue-water' Fleet has had other effects. Amphibious operations such as Suez and Lebanon are unlikely to be repeated with a rival naval power in the neighbourhood. Indeed, Admiral Gorshkov has proudly stated that his navy 'binds the hands of the imperialists'. (That this may be a blessing in disguise, saving us from ourselves, is another matter.) In addition, the first examples of Soviet gunboat diplomacy are already history. Clients have been supported during wars in the Middle East and the sub-continent; and the shaky radical Somalian government was bolstered.

So what does this all add up to? The evidence shows that the Soviets are most unlikely to begin a shooting war at sea, and that in any case the West has more than adequate forces to cope with such a contingency. More likely is the continued use of naval presence and visits to further diplomatic ends, which is actually nothing more than what we have been doing for decades. The Soviets are using their navy to flex their Great Power muscles around the globe – and short of blockade and war there is nothing that can be done to prevent this. Nor is there much to get so alarmed about.

John P. Mackintosh

Scotland for Aye

The political situation in Scotland is moving rapidly. The first question is whether the Government can retrieve anything from the wretched presentation and reception of the White Paper. On the content, the pressures are all in the same direction. The groups that matter are the Scottish Executive of the Labour Party, the Scottish Trade Union Congress and the Scottish Labour MPs. All of them are pressing for a more substantial measure of devolution. The principle of the White Paper is acceptable – namely that all subjects which were devolved to the existing Scottish Office ought to be handed on to the Assembly.

There seems to be general agreement that the political supervision of the Assembly by the UK Secretary of State for Scotland should be abandoned. To have two people (the Secretary of State and the Assembly's 'Chief Executive' – one Tory and one Labour, perhaps) going round claiming to be 'Mr Scotland' is a certain recipe for conflict. The power of the UK Government to override acts of the Assembly can be given to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council when it is a question of *intra* or *ultra vires*; while the veto on political grounds can be left unmentioned since the UK Parliament can always legislate for Scotland. It is also felt that the continuity or governor-general functions would be better bestowed on some impartial person or body, rather than a politician sitting in a Westminster cabinet.

The result of these changes would be to leave the Assembly and its executive free to get on with their job, with the UK Government only likely to intervene in cases of fundamental or deep-seated conflict, and then on an issue where the UK leaders felt they had real support among the Scottish electorate. The other two significant changes that these three groups all favour are that full responsibility for the Scottish Development Agency should be devolved, thus giving the Assembly a field of action over employment and that the taxing powers of the Assembly should be strengthened.

Now that attention has been concentrated on precise subjects to be devolved, the political forces are becoming clearer. Sections of the Scottish Establishment which have hitherto been operating virtually free of all control are deeply anxious to avoid being put under the Assembly. For instance, the anti-devolution lobby in the universities is led by the vice-chancellors and some senior academic staff. Their fear is not over 'orders to teach' but simply that a Scottish Ministry of Education which dealt directly with a Scottish UGC would know so much more about what was going on in the universities and would ask so many more pertinent questions.

At the same time, the case for devolving the universities is getting stronger as it is discussed. First, there is the danger that the Assembly might be tempted to build

up the colleges of further education as an alternative to the universities, just because the colleges were 'theirs'. Secondly, the whole school-to-university problem is becoming more difficult and cannot be handled properly without considering the colleges as a possible intermediary between school and university. As a result, the students, the main teachers' union and a reasonable minority of the university staff are either in favour of devolution or are prepared to make the necessary plans.

The judges nominated Lord Wheatley to make the case that they and the courts could not be under a subordinate assembly, as it would derogate from their standing. In fact, their fear is the same one; that they would be subject to some scrutiny for the first time. There is nothing so peculiarly Scottish as the system of prosecution, the law and the courts; and there is no reason why the whole of the law should not be devolved with the Lord Advocate in the Assembly in charge of prosecution only. Then there could be a Minister of Justice responsible for the legal system. This may well be the view of the Scottish Law Commission, though the Government has not yet published its submission on this question. In addition to the fears of the Establishment, conservative and property-owning groups are becoming alarmed about the possibility that the majority in the Assembly will be wild men from the Clyde and that extreme left-wing policies are likely. In reality, the chief danger is that if the SNP can poll the level of support it has been getting steadily for the past four months when the elections to the Assembly take place, it will win a majority of the seats.

This prospect ought to lead to a discussion of the merits of proportional representation, but it is not a possibility that has been widely discussed. The SNP are not interested (though they used to favour it) as they are now at, or past, the point where the present system would bring them a larger proportion of seats than of votes won. The Labour Party is reluctant to talk about the issue as it does not like to accept that the current SNP ratings on the Gallup Poll are in any sense 'normal'. Also, the Labour Party can scarcely hold that it is entitled to make 'a fundamental and irreversible change in the balance of power and wealth' in the UK on the basis of 38 per cent of votes cast, and then deny the SNP the right to make a fundamental change in the Treaty of Union also on the basis of 38 per cent of Scottish votes.

The total outcome of all these pressures seems likely to produce a Devolution Bill which, if passed, would create a Scottish Government with a distinct area of activity free from London supervision, unless there was a serious breakdown of relations. Will the prospect or actual existence of such an Assembly allow the Labour Party to hold some, or even all, of its 41 Scottish seats?

The difficulty is that the Scottish aspect is hard to disentangle from the general unpopularity which must attach to any government operating in the current situation. Indeed, the two are totally connected because the appeal of the SNP is very much the other side of the coin of disillusionment with the existing major parties and with the Labour Government in particular.

Looking at the forecasts, unemployment is supposed to remain at over a million till 1979-80. The rate of inflation is falling but it is still at 23 per cent. Tax is biting deep into the under-average wage-earner's take-home pay, and the Healey White Paper on Public Expenditure, given a national growth rate of 3½ per cent, forecasts a mere 0.5 per cent increase per annum in real standards of living. It would be hard for any party to survive these conditions and win a general election in 1978. The SNP actually expect the election earlier, as only four by-elections have to be lost to remove Labour's over-all majority. They feel that Mrs Thatcher cannot look as if she is reluctant to force the Government out of office and they are preparing for an election before the Devolution Bill (which they really do not want to be passed) is on the statute book.

From the point of view of Scots Labour MPs, for the Government to have to face an election before the Devolution Bill is passed is difficult. There could still be the cry 'to get meaningful devolution, vote SNP'. But what would be much worse would be if the Bill was allowed to die or was actually defeated by English Labour MPs. Just now, the Scots end of the party is holding a public campaign on the slogan 'Devolution, Not Separation'. But what can the party say if it cannot keep its part of the bargain?

Meanwhile, no one can calculate the odds in Westminster. Sir Alec (now Lord) Douglas-Home neatly torpedoed the position of the Conservative Party by saying that their proposal (taken from his 1971 Report) for an elected third chamber, to consider parts of Scottish Bills, was now out of date. Can enough Conservatives who take his line (and that of Mr Heath) be found to vote with the Government in order to compensate for Labour abstentions?

No one knows, but every time the fear grows that the Bill might be defeated, there is talk of making it a free vote. Yet if this happened, Scots Labour MPs, who have been giving this a central place in their political propaganda, would be in an impossible situation. While no more of them now want to join Mr Sillars or to leave what he calls 'the old British Labour Party', they might have to say they would, if returned, refuse to vote for any items in the Labour manifesto unless there was a promise to extract equal loyalty from English Labour MPs over devolution. In any case, to be unable to deliver would open them to such a mixture of charges, from bad faith to incompetence, and would leave them with no answer to the argument that only a larger number of SNP MPs will have any effect on Westminster.

Scottish politics looks like going on being exciting for years ahead. But for Labour MPs it is the excitement of living dangerously – with no knowledge of what the future may hold.

David Leitch

Italy: The Cost of a Miracle

In Paris everyone had said this was a bad time to visit Italy and the headlines in the Turin papers seemed to confirm these Gallic warnings. There was, of course, a crisis – no foreign exchange officially, though apparently on the black market, wherever that was, 'Italian Lira Falls 11 Per Cent'. Neither was there a government, despite efforts by Prime Minister Aldo More, understandably called 'the stoop-shouldered one', to cobble a workable minority together. The major obstacle derived from the fact that his chosen Interior Minister, Luigi Gui, had been named in connexion with a \$1.6m. Lockheed payment, and looked like staying out of the cabinet as a means of clearing the honourable Gui name. The papers had found a snappy formula for describing the situation – it was now 'the fifth longest of the 37 government interregnums since the fall of fascism'.

Probably the most attractive story, seized on with great gusto by the local press since it boded ill for their Roman compatriots, was to do with a 100-strong wolf-pack, normally confined within the limits of the Abruzzi national park, and now detected making a communal move towards the Eternal City. A day in the Piedmont capital, trying to change cheques and arrange appointments by telephone, made it clear why the problems of Rome should provide light relief. Turin, one saw, was wrestling with enormous troubles of its own.

There is the absence of coins for a start, which includes telephone tokens. To change a cheque it was necessary to find a small shop in the Piazza Carlo Felice normally catering for numismatists. In the window it was exhibiting government bonds of 1919, face value 250,000 lire, which was no mean sum, for the equivalent of £1.50 each. Put not your faith in Italian governments. As part of my own change there were a series of tiny cheques drawn on the local bank of San Paolo, face value 100 lire or about 7p each. In the course of the day I acquired four single cigarettes, an array of Perugia chocolates, and a card entitling me to a free coffee in a bar opposite the Carignano Palace. Locals have more or less given up using money for daily transactions – the old tradition of signing *cambiali*, or promissory notes, and settling bills once a month on the magic date of the 27th when salaries are paid, has thus acquired a new popularity. Barter is also back and tipping is now unknown.

Outside the coin shop there was a private policeman wearing pistol and cartridge belt, part of the *lotta alla delinquenza*. According to Giorgio Bocca, a local police reporter, the new police chief, Dr Musomeci, has got even more going against him than the unfortunate accident of being born in Trieste. On paper he has 1,700

men to deal with what 15 years ago was a compact city with a population just topping the half million, and is now a sprawling agglomeration extending some 70 square miles and containing 1.5 million inhabitants. In 1953 there were 4,702 burglaries; in 1974 there were 77,642. According to Bocca, most of the crime increase, like every other ill to which the once elegant capital is heir to, can be attributed to immigrants – 700,000 of them – from the impoverished south.

The Torinesi have an unlovely word for these new residents, whose passion for integration takes many unlikely forms, including fanatical support for Juventus, the Turin football team. They are called *terroni*, which means something like peasants. The lucky ones work at Fiat. Over 50,000 workers drive to and from the Fiat factory daily, producing a traffic wave almost beyond belief.

Gianni Agnelli, known rather chillingly as *l'avvocato*, flies over this mess in a personal helicopter, roundly cursed by all native-born Torinesi who claim that he should have opened plants in the south earlier, instead of bringing the southerners north. The Agnelli family holding company, IFI, amounts to by far the biggest concentration of industrial power outside government control. It goes far beyond car manufacture, extending to steel and rolling stock; chain-stores; Cinzano vermouth; the daily paper of Turin, *La Stampa*; and such hobbies as the ski resort of Sestriere, and Juventus. Umberto Agnelli, at 42 the younger brother, who is managing-director of Fiat, works so closely with the vice-president and strong man of the left-wing junta that controls Piedmont, Luigi Libertini, that there is a local joke about it. The 'Fiat-Lamborghini' sports model is to be renamed the 'Fiat-Libertini'.

Thus the super-capitalist from the now smog-bound 'hill' over the river Po, for 100 years the stronghold of the rich of Turin, forms an alliance with a communist deputy from the *sottoproletariato* of Palermo. A characteristic paradox of modern Italy, embodying the crucial principle of *arrangiarsi* – finding a way either to make the system work, or getting round it.

* * *

Very likely Pier Paolo Pasolini the film-director would have used his skills to conjure something poetic out of the waste land near Ostia where Pasolini the man was murdered last year. It would have been false though, for art is as alien as life in this lunar rubbish dump a mere 30 minutes from Rome in a fast car. Nothing grows, nothing is cultivated, and the few inhabitants emerge from their shanty-huts to peck out some kind of living by scavenging off the human and industrial detritus

which has left the scrubland looking like an elephants' graveyard for machines of various sorts, old cars mainly, which no longer work. There is something irredeemable about the place. Even the breezes from the marsh where the Tiber runs into the sea are polluted with sewage smells, and some chemical effluvium which makes the eyes water. It is like a metaphor for the 'ruined Italy' of late industrialism that Pasolini was writing about so hysterically in his last months of life. What a site for a final assignation, even for a connoisseur of the squalid.

And even when the chosen lover was 17-year old Giuseppe Pelosi, called *la rana* or 'the frog', purchased for a promised £12, a dinner of pasta and boiled chicken, and a ride in a sports car.

The car element is primordial – it is amazing how often the word *macchina* turns up in Pelosi's juvenile court trial for the murder, which he confessed to with an alacrity and indifference which perceptibly disconcerted even the hard-boiled Roman police. It was a car, Pasolini's blue Alfa-Romeo, which first intrigued the accused boy on the night of 2 November, when he allowed the film director to drive him away from a pick-up bar for prostitutes of both sexes near the grandiose Stazione Termini. He wanted money to repair his own *macchina*, naturally a more proletarian vehicle, an old Fiat 850. Later, on the waste ground near Ostia, it was Pasolini's own Alfa, driven *twice* over his body, which inflicted injuries so terrible – a fractured sternum, a lacerated liver, and much more – that the court had at first been in some doubt whether Pelosi's rather small frame could have been capable of doing so much damage. Again it was for dangerous driving and suspicion of theft – what was a slum boy like *la rana* doing at the wheel of an aristocratic Alfa? – which led the Ostia Polizia Sicurezza to arrest the murderer before even the corpse had been discovered.

Compared with the malignant scene of the crime, Pelosi's trial has been conducted in an atmosphere that is always cosy and familial – sometimes it has been positively festive. At different times his father, a shop assistant, his mother, his aunt, and even an aged grannie have turned up in the court, which is presided over by Sr Alfredo Moro, the Prime Minister's brother.

It is taking place in a small street with an early mimosa in flower and an unusual name, tucked in behind the 'Ministry of Justice and Grace' – the Via delle Zoccollette, which means 'street of the whores' in the Roman dialect. This same *Romano*, a language both blurred and guttural, is heard all day outside the court, where Pelosi's comrades, including his girl-friend Luana, hang around in the current uniform of (well-pressed) jeans and vaguely alpine

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BRITISH GAS



overcoats of ersatz green tweed called 'loden', hoping to get in on the action. Reporters are not allowed in court so the street, and the nearby Café Garibaldi, are used as a kind of information mart. For a contraband Marlboro cigarette, which she smokes as ferociously as a child sucking liquorice, Luana, aged 16, identifies 'the frog's' various relations. She is trying to sell some of his illiterate letters. In the café the reporters from the sensational press, younger brothers of the Via Veneto *papazzis* of the Dolce Vita epoch, are busy extracting nuggets from court officials, a process as painless as pulling nails out of rotten wood.

Nino Marazzita, the lawyer acting for Pasolini's aged mother, insists on the 'injustice' of the situation – as a minor Pelosi risks nothing more serious than a few months in a boys' reformatory, where no doubt he would be a hero, and at the least 'provisional liberty', or probation, when he attains the legal majority of 18.

A Dream of Celebrity

The boy himself obviously feels he is on a lucky streak – a few months older, and he would have faced a minimum sentence of 22 years. As it is, the trial is a formality, or a farce, and Pelosi drags his high-heels when leaving or entering the court, eager not to miss a scrap of attention. He uses the recesses to work on his quiff and shine his shoes with a special rag he carries. When the cameras flash his expression is a distressing mixture of greed, vanity and a kind of narcissistic bliss. He is apparently lost in a Roman Dream of celebrity, encouraged by the letters he has had from neo-fascists and others congratulating him on 'the fine job' he did, 'cleaning up' a notorious homosexual and left-winger. On television his father, a shop assistant, exuded slightly confused pride, called Pasolini 'a dirty brute', and hoped he would have done the same as his son had occasion arisen. He seemed genuinely to believe that the affair reflected credit on his own paternal role.

Why in fact did Pelosi murder his victim, let alone continue to mutilate the body as if trying to reduce it to human garbage? The boy felt no inhibition at describing the assault but faltered (and insisted that his mother leave the court-room) when it came to explaining the sexual exchanges that preceded the murder.

It turned out to be a question of pride as much as anything, a surprising variation on the theme of *machismo*. According to the Pelosi code there was no dispute while he performed the masculine role – but when Pasolini wanted him, as he said, 'to be a woman', then he lost his temper and turned on the film director. To Pelosi it was so perfectly logical that he wondered why they had asked him. There was, after all, the matter of his personal sexual *bella figura* at stake. How else could 'a man' have reacted?

Not by any standards an uplifting Roman tale, indeed one so resolutely unsusceptible to moral lessons that it became necessary to reshuffle the facts in the hope that a more satisfactory version could be made

to emerge. There might even be, or so it seemed for a few giddy days, a chance of making Pasolini into some kind of leftist martyr, or at the least the victim of a conspiracy.

The journalist Oriana Fallaci caused something of a sensation when she wrote in the magazine *Europeo* that there was more to the affaire than met the eye – specifically she wanted to know what the police had done about two other young men who she claimed had been seen on a motor-bike near the scene of the crime. Ms Fallaci subsequently found herself summoned to appear before an examining magistrate, and under pressure her source was revealed as Kay Withers, a well-established Rome correspondent of several American papers, who had mentioned the case to Ms Fallaci while interviewing her in a totally different context. Thus Ms Withers found herself before the magistrate, explaining that she scarcely remembered the few words that had been exchanged, but adding that the only other person she had mentioned the case to had been Robin Lustig of Reuters. So it came to be Mr Lustig's turn. He had actually broken the story first, simply by phoning the Ostia police on a Sunday morning, when the Italian news agency ANSA does not operate. However, he was in no doubt about the two other boys. He had neither heard nor written anything on the subject.

The Envious Brothers

Hardly then had the Fallaci version been demolished when, lo and behold, the police announced the arrest of two brothers, one 16, the other 14, who had been boasting around the bars of Rome's working-class Trastevere quarter that they had been involved in the crime. The boys were called Borsellino, to add a further filmic touch, and their contribution created such a sensation that the trial of Pelosi was adjourned for a week while their statements were verified. To no avail. It was finally established that the Borsellino brothers, like the envious youngsters waiting in their 'lodens' in the Via delle Zoccollette, were doing no more than making an effort to share in the limelight.

The affair still remains of absorbing interest, its overtones so macroscopic that all kinds of explanations are advanced to explain the crime. It is a consequence of the well-known Italian unemployment phenomenon – not only are a minimum 1.5 million of Italy's work force without jobs, but that work force itself is by far the lowest in the EEC. Thus, even according to official figures, for every two Italians with jobs there is a third 'professionally' unemployed, either drawing a pension or living by some such moonlighting occupation as Pelosi's 'amateur' prostitution. Again, the three-shift school system, which leads to children roaming the streets at odd hours and makes it impossible to tell whether they are playing truant or not, causes 'professional delinquency'. Again, Italy's 'current decadence' is at fault. Or again, it's the fault of the Devil, to cite the opinions of four local analysts applying themselves to the case on one day.

Pasolini himself, interestingly enough, had views on the subject dating from his last year of life. During this period he was not only engaged on his sado-masochistic movie about the Mussolini Salò puppet republic, but also produced much polemical journalism about how the economic miracle which trebled the country's GNP between 1950-70 had also 'ruined the soul' of Italy.

Pathetic Nostalgia

He saw this ruin everywhere, and in January 1975 gave an interview to the Agnelli-controlled daily paper, *La Stampa* of Turin, in which he even described the decadence of the *ragazzi di vita*, the expression used for boys like Pelosi and the Borsellino brothers, and also the title of the first novel which established Pasolini on the Italian literary scene when he published it in 1955. His remarks, given the circumstances of his death, are all the more striking.

'The world of Roman sub-proletariat after the war was degraded and atrocious,' he said. 'But nonetheless it retained both its own standards of morality – a code of living – and its own vitality of language, which is no longer the case, and for which no substitute has been found. Nowadays the boys from these slums have motor-bikes of their own and watch TV but they scarcely know how to talk, or even sneer.'

It is strange to hear such a Leavisite argument in this context, the vitality of the language being used as a criterion of social health. And there is also something pathetic about Pasolini's nostalgia for the hustlers *d'antan*. Devitalised and inarticulate as they may be, the *ragazzi* have certainly had the last word; the trial itself has developed in an odd way where the victim has ended up in the dock, and the self-confessed murderer has turned into a star witness testifying against the corpse.

I wonder whether Pasolini explained his theory of alienation to *la rana*, over the pasta and chicken, or on the fast road to Ostia.

* * *

The Italian Communist Party's modest palazzo in the Via delle Botteghe Oscure is not at all dark, as the name implies, but comfortably shabby and full of bustling informality. It is so much a fixture in one of the city's busiest areas that it is easy to miss altogether. Next door is Rinascita, one of the best paper-back bookshops, and opposite is an enormous emporium dedicated to that most fanatical of Italian bourgeois hobbies, collecting oriental carpets, which combine maximum style with solid (and untaxable) investment potential. It is only a couple of minutes from the Piazza Venezia, with the wedding-cake monument and the window from which *Il Duce*, exploiting the same national weakness for grandiosity, was accustomed to deliver his harangues in language so bristling with superlatives and diminutives that it appeared to have no core. In contrast Enrico Berlinguer, not so much *duce* as managing director of Italian communism, always speaks with the modulated tones of the aristocrat he is.

Born in Sardinia, like his spiritual father,

Antonio Gramsci, Berlinguer needless to say has never used the title 'Don' to which he is entitled. Neither did his real father, a lawyer and socialist parliamentarian, who was Italy's high commissioner responsible for purging ex-fascists after the war. The young Berlinguer had joined the PCI in 1943, and soon after was imprisoned for subversive activities. His war record thus compares favourably with that of his French counterpart, Georges Marchais, who about the same time, in circumstances which periodically lead to bitter recriminations and denials in Paris, was employed in Germany by Messerschmidt.

Berlinguer's ascension through the party ranks was swift, effortless and unobtrusive. As a protégé of Palmiro Togliatti, whose militant portrait greets visitors to the PCI HQ, Berlinguer was a member of the Central Committee at the precocious age of 24. In due course he became secretary-general of the Youth Federation and then, such are his administrative gifts, chief of the party's organisation department while still in his middle thirties. When Togliatti gave way to Luigi Longo, Berlinguer became deputy secretary and dauphin, a difficult role he assumed with his habitual ease and lack of fuss. He took over the leadership from Longo in 1972, aged just 50, without anyone seriously contesting his legitimacy.

The contrast between Berlinguer and Marchais could hardly be more extreme. The Frenchman is gruff, combative and puritanical, an extravert whose slightly threatening bonhomie noticeably fails to create much jollity around him, even on ostensibly festive occasions. Berlinguer walks like a cat, alone. Marchais is a walking personification of the French party's obsession with proletarian legitimacy – it is inconceivable that anyone of Berlinguer's background, surrounded with spicy intimations of nobility (a Spanish title at that, not to mention a wife who is a practising Catholic, and four *baptised* children), could ever prosper in the French party.

While the French party is as monolithic as its blockhouse headquarters in the 19th arrondissement, the PCI is confusingly eclectic.* The French party tries to build political alliances; the Italian is more interested in *blocs* of influence. In the local elections of June, 1975 the PCI persuaded one Italian in three to vote for it, and ended up with left-wing *giunte* in two important northern regions, and communist mayors almost everywhere except Rome (of which more later). The communist successes have dwarfed the Italian socialists, forcing them increasingly into 'extra-parliamentary' and radical pressure-group politics, particularly on issues like abortion and women's liberation.

In France the socialists have managed to remain the majority party of the Left, and since the common accord of 1972 have never been in danger of becoming a less than equal partner. The PCI is almost embarrassingly full of bourgeois intellectuals

*For their discussion of this and many other relevant matters see *Communism in Italy and France*, edited by that formidable pair, Professor Donald Blackmer of MIT and Professor Sidney Tarrow of Cornell, published by Princeton University Press at £14.60.

NEDO PAY CHARTS

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while the PCF accepts them only on sufferance.

What the PCI has, above all, is confidence – as Berlinguer demonstrated with such sang-froid when he attended the 25th Soviet Party Congress in Moscow last week. The PCI blithely answered press speculation about what form Berlinguer's speech would take by saying it would be 'normal', meanwhile drawing attention to the results of an opinion poll conducted by the Rome conservative daily *Il Tempo*, and published in a spirit of some melancholy. Asked to assess a series of political leaders according to 'sympathy and reliability' the respondents gave Berlinguer 55.8 per cent, or a 21-per cent lead over his closest rival, Francesco de Martino, secretary of the socialists. Another communist, Giancarlo Pajetta, emerged as third, ahead of the leading Christian Democrat, the party secretary, Benigno Zaccagnini. The actual head of government, Aldo Moro, could manage no better than 20.1 per cent, a result which makes the spring elections, when Rome will elect a new mayor, a near certainty for the PCI list.

With this kind of domestic support, much of it stemming from the widespread comprehension that the PCI is both prepared to accommodate to different forms of capitalism by pursuing conservative fiscal policies, and that the PCI is also the least corrupt of all the parties, Berlinguer was able to make his Kremlin speech. From a position of quite extraordinary strength.

Leonid Brezhnev was thus obliged to receive feline congratulations on the success of the Helsinki agreement and, in the next paragraph, a reassertion from Berlinguer that the PCI was committed to the Nato alliance. The Soviet leader was also treated to a little lecture on the 'historical compromise' leading to 'the building of a socialist society with the contribution of different political forces.' And finally, perhaps more galling of all, Berlinguer was able to echo Gramsci before the delegates, on the subject of not only religious accommodation, but also 'a respect of all collective freedoms . . . in the fields of culture, arts and sciences'.

As the congress started there was a development in the running scandals of Lockheed and others which suddenly lifted the whole tone from banal disclosures of a kind Italians have come to expect to something altogether more stylish. One of the state's most important financial servants, Signor Camillo Croci, and until the previous day head of the national Finmeccanica holding corporation, left town one jump ahead of the fraud squad. With him went his wife, children and jewel all in his private helicopter. Also aboard, as the Italian press put it with praiseworthy understatement, were 'divers documents thought to implicate personalities of the first plan.'

With Christian Democrats like Signor Crociani around, it is not surprising that the battered survivors of the once-mighty American intelligence presence in Italy complain bitterly that anti-communism has virtually ceased to exist. Their only consolation is the same as the Kremlin's – that Enrico Berlinguer is a doppelganger for the notorious revisionist Eduard Bernstein, and that, with any luck, Italian communism will turn out not to be communism at all.

Jeremy Bugler

NCOs of the Law

Once the new Royal Commission on legal services gets going and starts to burrow through the dense briar undergrowth of the Bar it will perforce have to make its mind up about one of the more curious work-group subcultures prospering today. 'We are a unique lot,' says Bill Roberts, senior clerk of the chambers of Patrick Bennett QC, speaking of his fellows. He is entirely right.

Hidden in the quiet of the Inns of Court, rarely coming into contact with the public, the barristers' clerks make up an extraordinary body, working-class in origin, whose top men are earning enormous sums. Partly because of the boom in crime and the spread of legal aid, today there are a good number of senior clerks who earn between £15,000 and £25,000 a year on commission on barristers' fees. Much of this money, especially where criminal legal aid is involved, comes from public funds.

The spectacle of a basically working-class group doing as well as its middle-class masters is by no means offensive, but the Royal Commission ought to be the body to call an end to what is really an authorised racket that has sprung out of a combination of cowardice and self-interest in the Bar Council. The public is not getting the service it should from the Bar, and the clerks are partly to blame.

'The clerk,' said Mr Justice Megarry in one of his lectures, 'is a complicated cross between a theatrical agent, a business manager, an accountant and a trainer.' The clerk administers the barristers' chambers, accepts or rejects briefs for them, negotiates fees with solicitors, agrees listings with court officials, and generally represents his charges.

The senior clerk of a chambers is undoubtedly very powerful. A skilled clerk can increase the earnings of his barristers, particularly in private work, whereas a poor one can turn a chambers into chaos. He often has the power of saying which barrister can join a chambers and even have a major say in who can head it. His relationship to his barristers has been well described by Michael Zander in his book *Lawyers and the Public Interest* as 'a little like that between the subaltern and the sergeant-major'. The young barrister may call his clerk by his first name and be called 'Sir' or 'Yes, Mr Blank' in return, but the power lies with the clerk, as it does with the sergeant-major.

Partly for this reason, some barristers heartily dislike clerks. But it is very rare for barristers to speak out against clerks in public; they are too vulnerable. The senior clerk controls the distribution of work, and barristers, especially those working in specialities like shipping, chancery or tax, can be damaged.

Cyril Batchelor, a very pleasant man who has clerked for Lord Justice Scarman and Mr Justice Melford Stevenson, is chairman

of the Barristers' Clerks' Association and he doesn't think that a clerk can put pressure on his barristers. 'I can't believe it. It would be very sad if that happened. The barrister could go straight to the head of his chambers who, I am sure, would back him up.' With that, many barristers would disagree. 'The Bar's golden rule,' said one, 'is never get your clerk's back up.'

But if barristers do get tyrannised by their clerks, that may not matter too much. One might even say they deserve it for participating in that throw-back atmosphere of Oxbridge Everafterwards that pervades the Inns of Court. Yet the clerk has an intimate part in the administration of justice and his work is a public matter. There are three main charges against clerks. That they are prejudiced against reform and against women and coloured barristers. That they are partly responsible for the way many barristers never see their briefs until very late in the day. That, living off a percentage of the 'take', they have an interest in forcing up fees.

One person who felt the clerks' prejudice is a clerk herself: Mary Hickson, the clerk of the most unusual chambers in Britain, those of Lord Gifford in Lambeth. She works in an office that has a notice 'Sue The Bastards!' by the door and an anti-abortion poster in the window. As part of her training for clerking, she spent two summer months in 'The Cloisters' – the left-wing chambers headed by John Platts-Mills QC. 'I learned how much I disliked the Temple and how much they don't want a woman to be a clerk. The senior clerk there just told me to go away and get married.' This prejudice is exercised against women as barristers, though, says Hickson, 'they think they're okay for some things like matrimonial work.'

Bill Roberts and Cyril Batchelor, the two senior clerks I saw, both recognise the seriousness of the charge that clerks can serve the public badly by a habit of over-booking. 'The British Airways business, isn't it?' says Batchelor. Clerks, on the face of it, have an interest in booking in a few more briefs than they are likely to be able to place with their barristers to cover a sudden gap should a man plead guilty unexpectedly or the police drop charges. 'In the old days, this may have happened,' says Batchelor, 'but not now.' He and Roberts argue that the negotiations that clerks do with the court officials over the listings of cases can actually improve the efficiency of the courts, what Roberts referred to delicately as 'our own job of a little advocacy with the court officials . . .'

Given the present listing system, they may be right, but the charge of over-booking is still made. Quite how listing should be solved isn't clear. At the moment it is a public scandal that very often a barrister doesn't get to see the man he has to defend in court until a few moments before he

goes into the dock. Obviously it is not entirely the clerk's fault, but the suspicion is that they make a difficult situation worse.

But the charge that really worries the clerks is that there is no good reason for paying them on commission. It gives the clerk a direct personal interest in trying to get his barrister as high a fee as possible. 'Honestly and sincerely,' says Cyril Batchelor, 'I do not think a clerk says to himself "What's my percentage of this?" when he's agreeing a fee.' If that were the case, clerks would be different from the rest of the human species.

Legal aid fees, of course, are fixed by the taxing officers of the courts, but it is the clerks who submit the estimates. Such is the abundance of criminal legal aid work, the clerk in effect is getting a percentage of work he's played no part in securing. At least 5 per cent of the barrister's fee must be given to the clerk, but some chambers pay very much more – 10 per cent is not uncommon. It's this 'cut' that makes a clerk such a high earner: he's taking 10 per cent of the earnings of perhaps 20 well-paid barristers in his chambers.

A few bold chambers have tried to break the system by putting their senior clerks on a salary, just like the junior clerks and the typists. The clerks who have agreed have been treated like blacklegs by their fellows. Some years ago the chambers of Geoffrey

Crispin QC appointed ex-secretary Celia Hart as their clerk, on a salary. 'I was asked to come before the association and explain myself,' she told me. Eventually, for a quiet life, Miss Hart moved on to a percentage (five but not ten.)

Senior clerks can 'discipline' errant salary-earners by giving their chambers fewer of the briefs their own barristers can't handle. Moreover, the clerks' association now runs a training scheme for juniors (minimum qualification: one O-level in the English language; optional final examination) at which juniors are instructed about the merits of the percentage system. In fact, there is no good reason why the senior clerk to a chambers shouldn't be paid a salary just like any other office manager.

More than 20 years ago a committee composed mainly of lawyers spent six years looking at Supreme Court procedure and practice. They also peered into clerking, and their final document, known as the Evershed Report, sanctioned the commission system of paying clerks. Many of their reasons look a little silly today, but one should not underestimate the durability of the clerks nor the ossification of the Bar. As Cyril Batchelor puts it: 'One test of whether our system is successful is that it has survived so long. People of the intelligence that we work for would have done something about us if we could be doing better.' Now, wouldn't they?

Naomi Shepherd

Israel's Leadership Crisis

Mr Itzhak Rabin's current struggle to retain control in the face of attacks from within his own party and outside it indicate more than a cabinet crisis and go deeper than the question of personal relations between members of the Israeli Government. The real issue is whether the Labour Party is still capable of providing leadership. Israel faces two basic problems at present: one is that her foreign policy is dictated by Washington and the other that urgent economic reforms outlined on paper and approved are not being fully implemented. The reasons for both failures are similar. Israel cannot articulate her own policy because Labour has no policy-making group within the radically divided coalition cabinet. Economic reforms are bogged down because special interest groups object and are placated, the result not only of electoral considerations but also of Labour's involvement in the economy and in the unions. The consequent sense of instability and aimlessness has led to talk of Weimar and wild schemes for 'charismatic' governments staffed by generals, businessmen and professors are conjured with.

Two issues in the last few weeks have prejudiced Mr Rabin's future as Prime Minister: one was his unguarded reference at a briefing for Israeli journalists during his recent Washington trip to inflated arms lists – which he had himself helped to draw

up. The other was his tentative acceptance of a new American formula for further Israeli withdrawals in exchange for a non-belligerence pact with the Arab states, as outlined to the cabinet last week. The first incident has been widely interpreted as heralding a possible victory for Shimon Peres, the Defence Minister. But Mr Peres neither engineered the row nor exploited it. His power base within the Government is still insufficient for that.

Moreover, while the hardliners within the Government might back Peres if concrete proposals for withdrawal were on the cards, it is the moderates who have most recently taken Mr Rabin to task on three main issues. These were his failure to take a stronger line on illegal settlement in the West Bank (on which issue Mr Rabin made his only threat to resign, in a party forum, if he were not supported), for taking too strong a line against a Palestinian state, and for failing to present an overall peace plan detailing Israel's concessions for peace. Among the moderates however there is no obvious contender for Mr Rabin's job.

Even before the present crisis, the Government had managed to back down within less than two months on no fewer than nine separate decisions. Among the most important reversals were: failure to check illegal settlement in the West Bank; failure to unite all the ministries dealing with

social welfare into one overall body, the result of Rabin's clumsy dealings with his colleagues; reversal of the decision to close the copper mines at Timna near Eilat, the town's main employer but a total waste of public money since the world slump in copper prices; and the failure to introduce the much-heralded VAT.

The Finance Minister, Mr Rabinowitz, has just accepted the resignation of Professor Michael Bruno, his specially appointed economic adviser, one of a team which formulated a new tax system introduced last summer whose purpose was to ensure a more equitable distribution of Israel's huge tax burden and to discourage evasion but which is already being seriously eroded by political pressures. The country's leading economists have strongly criticised the inflated Budget, just announced, which threatens to undermine the policy of cutbacks in government spending announced last December and also the injection of money into the economy at over twice the scale originally provided for.

Labour is obviously too divided and weak at present to risk early elections, which otherwise fall due at the end of next year. The secretary-general of the Labour Party, Meir Zarmi, resigned two weeks ago, complaining that apart from his inability to solve the party's financial problems the elected institutions of the party were incapable of making decisions. Also, there is no obvious candidate to replace Mr Rabin, who clearly intended his Washington visit (which everyone here has forgotten was a successful one) as a preliminary to success at the party's internal elections in the next few weeks. Had he succeeded, Mr Rabin might well have been strong enough to eliminate his rivals and risk early elections on a definite platform. This now seems impossible.

The uproar in Israel over the State Department's latest bright gimmick on negotiations seems to have persuaded Washington that they are endangering Mr Rabin further and that threatened cutbacks in American aid might well push Israel back into the protective cover of a wall-to-wall coalition – the ultimate in immobility. It is clearly on the question of American support for Israel that Mr Rabin will stand or fall. He has all along stood proxy for American promises to Israel. The American agreement to a Security Council debate, with Palestinian participation as a condition of Syrian renewal of the United Nations forces contract in the Golan last November, was a blow to Rabin's prestige and also ruled out a return to Geneva. The American veto on PLO participation in future negotiations, however, seemed to justify his stand. On the other hand Mr Rabin's repeated insistence that, if Israel agrees to theoretical withdrawals in exchange for concessions the Arabs will not consider, the West will not hold Israel responsible should war erupt, is astonishingly ingenuous. As the May deadline for the further extension of the Golan arrangement approaches, fresh American pressures on Mr Rabin could be fatal. But it will not help Labour to jettison Mr Rabin if they cannot pull together and articulate a realistic policy, clearly spelt out, and firmly carried out.

Jerusalem

London Diary

□ 'My father,' said George Brown to me on Tuesday night, 'was always an awkward sod – and I suppose I am too.' That still seems to me the best epitaph on his Labour Party career – a career that brought him 13 years ago to within 31 votes of becoming leader of the party. I can throw very little light on his somewhat abrupt decision to resign – though, from the way he was talking on Tuesday night, it did seem in some way to be linked with the fact that his father (one of the first members of Ben Tillett's Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Workers' Union) had just died at the age of 88. The other thing he kept referring to was Solzhenitsyn's *Panorama* broadcast the previous evening. 'When I listened to that statement of his about possessing freedom and not valuing it, I felt truly guilty – I thought he was speaking direct to me.' Did he think that he had embarrassed his former friends and supporters within the party? I rather admired the candour of his reply: 'By embarrassing people, you smoke them out. Sometimes folk *have* to be embarrassed.' But not surely in the way the whole nation must have been on Tuesday night?

□ I hope anyway that those responsible for organising Solzhenitsyn's visit to Britain are proud of their trophy. I was not one of the chosen few permitted to meet Solzhenitsyn; but then neither was Michael Davie, who wrote far and away the best piece about our new Spengler-Mark 2 in the *Observer* last Sunday. The BBC, in fact, kept him under such close wraps that even Bryan Cowgill (the controller of BBC-1) had not the remotest idea the prophet was actually on the premises until he happened to spot him in a corridor at the TV Centre last Friday, did a double take and managed to come to in time to offer the appropriate homage. The 'security' angle seems to me the most ironic aspect of the BBC's part in the whole operation. Did you know the Corporation maintained 'a facility at a country house near Northampton' for just such contingencies? Very BBC, very KGB.

□ Another visitor to London this week certainly did not get quite the same treatment. True, Giorgio Napolitano, the number two figure in the Italian Communist Party, was received, like Solzhenitsyn, by Roy Jenkins – perhaps the one minister whom the Manifesto Group would have allowed to get away with it. But Sr Napolitano had the greatest difficulty even in getting an audience in the Foreign Office and certainly was received by no minister there. Not that he was complaining when I met him on Monday. He's used, as he explained, to even colder shoulders than that. Last year he was invited to give a series of lectures at Yale, Harvard, MIT and Cornell. He accepted the invitation and was eager to go: he had reckoned, however, without the State Department. The spirit of détente (or 'relaxation of tension' as we are now told to call it) does not apparently extend to even an Italian communist being let loose on America's cam-

puses. His visa application was firmly refused. A little hard, perhaps, on a man whose own press conference in London this week was boycotted as a deliberate gesture of protest by the entire Soviet press corps.

□ Mrs Betty Ford has always struck me as quite the nicest (and brightest) of the Gerald Ford family. What, then, was Simon Winchester up to in the *Guardian* on Monday in writing about her for all the world as if she were a second Lurleen Wallace? An unduly harsh comparison? Well, take a read of this:

As one sees the wretched Mrs Ford lurch almost drunkenly from appointment to dreary appointment, her teeth gritted in a bone-crashing contortion that is said to be a smile, her voice lisping with the sound of ill-fitting dentures, her hair piled untidily on her head . . . one begins to feel that she is being used, exploited and driven for the unashamed purpose of President Ford's campaign.

Every word of that would certainly have been applicable to the sad, unforgettable first Mrs Wallace – dragooned by her husband while already a victim of cancer into becoming Governor of Alabama so that he could go on running the state at a time when he was constitutionally disbarred from succeeding himself. But whatever else Jerry Ford may or may not be he is hardly a second George Wallace. So what was Winchester driving at? My own suspicion is that he was trying, in a clumsy way, to blurt out something which I increasingly hear from the other side of the Atlantic: that it's an odds-on bet that Ford will not be this year's Republican candidate not because of any veto from the voters in the primaries but rather because of an understandable human inhibition dictated by the state of his wife's health.

□ Last week the NS reported the latest stage in the St Paul's Fields Saga. We said that the site – 14-odd acres where the school and its playing fields stood until the then London County Council made an irresistible offer in 1964 – was now desolate. But for the local people it is the only place remotely resembling a village green, and last sunny Sunday about 100 proved their belief by arriving with half a dozen domestic lawn mowers. It is, incidentally, extraordinary how toy-like these look compared to the ones normally used on public spaces; but between 11 a.m. and dusk they managed to mow at least a third of the field. They hope to disprove any possible GLC argument that the whole area is so derelict that there is no sensible alternative to covering it with a version of Spaghetti Junction-cum-York University.

□ I can't say I have been much moved by all the protests both from the accused and their lawyers against the 'dawn raids' that brought about the arrests on Saturday of the 12 members or former members of Sir Robert Mark's 'manor'. I don't, for example, recall Commander Drury ever getting particularly concerned when much the same thing was done against 'political' suspects in his days at the Yard. But what still seems to me incredible – taking into account what happened last Saturday morn-

ing – is the whole content and approach of Sir Robert Mark's speech to the conference of Conservative women on the previous Wednesday. To boast at that stage of the number of officers required to leave the force since he took over – and to add that, whatever juries might have found at subsequent trials, very few of them could conceivably have been not guilty – was an unbelievable piece of ineptitude on the part of the country's most sophisticated policeman. Has Sir Robert Mark never heard of the law of 'imminence'? It means an editor can get into trouble under the law of contempt if, even while having no direct knowledge that a prosecution is about to be brought, he is still unfortunate enough to publish material that could be construed as being 'prejudicial' to the relevant person's defence. In this case if any individual was in a position to know that charges were on the way it was surely Sir Robert Mark. Are we now to understand that there is one law for senior policemen and quite another for newspapers?

□ I suppose I must be one of the people that the proposed new compulsory seat-belt law is meant to bring into line. Although I do occasionally 'belt up' – say on a motorway – sloth or idleness has usually until now won the day. And not, in fact, only that – fear of being made to look a fool too. If the new law is going to work, I'm certain that the manufacturers must be compelled to introduce some uniformity into their buckles and catches. For someone like me who can only just manage to find the lever on a two-door car to push the front seat forward, seat-belts in strange vehicles present horrifying hazards. Hazards certainly not made any less intimidating by the universal tendency of the gentlest type of people to produce a disdain fully worthy of Tony Crosland as you sit next to them desperately fumbling and bumbling. 'Really,' they say 'it's quite simple' – and you begin to wish you'd taken the bus after all.

Crucifer

This England

Prizes: £1.50 book token for first entry, £1 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

□ The Hillingdon Town Crier is to get a new hat and new lace edging for his uniform – provided they do not cost more than £10. The money will come from the council's bus-fares subsidies fund. – *Evening News* (E. G. Breeze)

□ Jill says she doesn't believe in all that Women's Lib stuff. I want a man to look after me, to make a fuss of me, she says. I don't have any political views, either. I always vote Conservative. – *Daily Mirror* (Humphrey Evans)

□ School career advisers must prepare school-leavers not only for work but also for unemployment, the secretary of the Institute of Careers Officers, Mr Ray Hurst, writes in a careers guide published today. – *Guardian* (E. Courtman)

□ The lot of the architectural conservationist in Ulster has not, in recent years, been a happy one. – *Country Life* (T. K. Martin)

Michael Dobbs

Fleet Street Mystery Tour

If you want to know how Fleet Street ticks, I can thoroughly recommend winning a journalism award. It affords an excellent vantage point for comparing the news values which editors profess in public with those they practise in private.

I speak from personal experience, being the proud possessor of a Nicholas Tomalin Memorial Award and having spent most of the last month hawking it around from one editorial door to the next. I won the award for a proposal to report on development as a freelance from villages in Africa and Asia – and that was my first problem. Development may be the stuff of which journalism prizes are made, but in Fleet Street mythology it is regarded as a monumental bore. Yes, we know it affects the lives of millions on millions of our fellow human beings but verily, verily we say unto you: it does not sell newspapers.

My mission, which was to take me from the lushly carpeted offices of the nationals to the bare cubbyholes of specialist magazines, was therefore a difficult one. It was to convince naturally cynical editors that even development can be entertaining. My thoughts on how development might be made interesting first took shape when I spent a month in Delhi in 1973 on attachment from Reuters to the *Hindustan Times*. Under the editorship of George Verghese, who has since been sacked for his attacks on Mrs Gandhi's Government, the paper was carrying a series of regular reports on life in an obscure little village called Chhatera. The articles were an attempt to provide a window on rural India for urban readers who knew, and perhaps cared, very little about the conditions in which most of their fellow countrymen lived. It was a unique experiment in Indian journalism and produced what I found was the most readable section in the paper.

I felt then that this was an approach which could be equally valid for Western newspapers – a feeling reinforced later when I covered the World Food Conference in Rome. An entire fortnight's diet of doom-laden predictions, noble rhetoric, and statistics by the metric tonne taught me considerably less about development than a couple of hours spent sitting under a banyan tree in Chhatera. It also made me wonder what logic leads the world's press to descend *en masse* for international talk-ins while largely ignoring what is happening in the villages where most people live.

Writing about development on the basis of speeches at conferences seems to me rather like reporting a war from the UN General Assembly. It is largely hot air, has precious little to do with what is happening on the ground, and lacks the drama and authenticity of first-hand experience. The story of a stubborn Indian peasant resisting modern farming methods is interesting in a way in which some dubious statistics

about land reform are not. A British reader who would have difficulty getting worked up about comparative terms of trade might sympathise with an individual Tanzanian who finds that the market for his sisal has collapsed.

Anyway, to get back to the Tomalin Award: I put all these ideas down on paper, added a touch of rhetoric of my own and posted them off. I was genuinely surprised to be told a few months later that I had won – along with an independently-minded Ukrainian journalist languishing in a Soviet labour camp. The news of the prize prompted me to leave Reuters after three years and venture out, starry-eyed, into the big, bad world of newspaper journalism.

My decision was announced in lights on the back page of the *Sunday Times*. Their diarist, Atticus, wrote: 'Dobbs thinks press interest concentrates far too much on high-level policy towards the poor countries and he wants to divert it towards the world's two million villages . . . I wish him the best of luck.' For which I was very grate-

Roger Woddiss

Precautionary Tale

What angered Arthur Stanley Twist,
The former ardent motorist
And resident of Muswell Hill,
Was hearing of the seat belt Bill.
'Clunk-click may be all right,' said he,
'For Jimmy Savile OBE,
But don't, for heaven's sake, suppose
You'll get me wearing one of those.'

His freedom was at stake, he felt,
If he was forced to wear a belt;
Thus, burning with crusading zeal,
He got behind the driving wheel,
And though he very rarely swore,
He said: 'Damn 1984!
Big Brother's here! I know my rights!'
As he approached the traffic lights.

The amber gleamed ten yards ahead,
When Arthur suddenly saw red;
With slavery so close at hand,
Somebody had to make a stand:
He wasn't going to sit and wait,
But started to accelerate,
And being somewhat overwrought,
Collided with a juggernaut.

Policemen, doctors, nurses too
Did what they could to pull him through,
And skilled at saving life and limb,
They bandaged what was left of him.
The surgeon sadly shook his head
As, still defiant, Arthur said:
'I had to demonstrate, you see,
My boundless love of liberty.'

ful, but before dashing off to the African bush to divert press interest I thought I had better do a little recce round the Fleet Street jungle.

And what better place to start than the *Sunday Times* itself – that Mecca of investigative journalism? Armed with Atticus's best wishes, I knocked on the door of its editor, Harold Evans, who was also one of the judges for the award. He shook my hand warmly, congratulated me on my project, and appeared well disposed towards the idea of paying me a retainer for contributions to his paper. The discussion was adjourned on the amicable understanding that I submit detailed proposals for him to consider.

I did this and was surprised to receive a reply not from Mr Evans, but from his deputy, Frank Giles. 'I hope you will not be too discouraged,' he wrote, 'if I say that I do not believe that we shall be able at the *Sunday Times* to help you very much either in terms of money or space.' Needless to say I was discouraged, not least because of the encouragement I had received from the same paper two weeks before.

My next port of call was the *Sunday Times*'s stable companion, *The Times*. In fact I never got as far as the front door, being warned away by a bucket of cold water from its deputy editor, Louis Heren. (Are deputy editors for *Times* newspapers specially trained in the art of damping down enthusiasm, I wonder?) Using rather more direct language than Mr Giles, he wrote: 'I am afraid we cannot agree with your thesis about development coverage . . . if I may be allowed to express a personal opinion, I think you will be wasting your time.'

He went on in the same vein:

As for reporting from the villages, I can tell you from personal experience in India, Africa and Asia, that it provides remarkably little worthwhile copy. As Agnew once said about slums, when you have seen one you have seen them all. It sounds brutal and insensitive, but alas it is true. You are probably too interested in the subject to listen to contrary advice, but if you wish to succeed and prosper as a journalist, I really think you should specialise in another field.

Well it was nice of Mr Heren (and I'm not being sarcastic here) to say what he felt. I found that most editors who thought I was talking nonsense would gaze at their blotters and start to mumble something about 'deep financial water' – a slightly sick joke when you consider the rates freelances are paid. The *Financial Times* really drove the point home by omitting to put a stamp on their reply to my letter. I had to cough up 13p excess postage to learn that they were not interested.

I do not want to give the impression that every editor I approached buried his head ostrich-like in the sand and waited till I went away. Many seemed genuinely interested in what I had to say and gave me a lot of their valuable time. And some papers, notably the *Guardian* and the *Evening Standard*, even commissioned articles.

When I started out on my magical mystery tour round Fleet Street I thought of British newspapers as locked in a downward trajectory, frightened of new experiments in case they lost their few remaining

readers. Perhaps there is some truth in that but I am impressed by the ease with which a semi-outsider like myself can get a hearing for what some obviously consider cranky ideas.

My tour has also made me more conscious of the responsibility that falls on newspapers and journalists in creating interest. No subject, certainly not development, is so sacrosanct that it demands the

attention of readers. It must compete for their custom by being presented in a lively and entertaining way. Development is thought to be dull because it has too long been the preserve of academics who write about it in terms of statistics or theories. In fact it is about people and conflict – two prime ingredients, I would have thought, for good journalism. Who knows? It might even sell a few newspapers.

First Person

Arthur Marshall

Faites vos Jeux

A pleasant fireside pastime is for those present to choose the one event in the world's rich panorama of memorable happenings that they would most have liked to witness. Give, as the exam papers have it, reasons for your choice. Selection is difficult and the possibilities are varied indeed: Coronation of Elizabeth I, Noah safely afloat, Hardy kissing Nelson, the Last Supper, the Duke of Clarence upside down in that butt of malmsey, the Wright ('Chocks away!') Brothers airborne for the first time etc.

More interesting to me are some of the minor historical moments featuring slightly less well publicised events. The expression on Wellington's face, for example, when the populace, enraged by his attitude to the Reform Bill, hurled brickbats through the windows of Apsley House on the anniversary of Waterloo (the owner's only known comment was 'Rum day to choose, I must say!'). And there was the evening, now remembered by few, when Maynard Keynes, fascinated all his life by the laws of chance and the rules of probability as demonstrated all too clearly and expensively on roulette tables, came bursting into the Cambridge rooms of J. T. Sheppard (subsequently a famous Provost of King's) with an excited shout of 'I hear they've suppressed zero in the casino at Dieppe.' Sheppard looked up. 'I suppose that means we must cross to France tonight?' 'Of course. Pack at once.'

Non-gamblers will naturally require an explanation of what the suppression of zero entails. I am not an expert but I did learn how to play roulette, though not how to win, at what all must regard as the fountain-head: the Casino at Monte Carlo. Lush Edwardian novels with Riviera settings, together with dramatic silent films (how yellow all the participants looked), had warned me what to expect both from gamblers and misers. They were what was known as 'crazed'. Misers gloated in private over their hoards of gold coins, occasionally pouring handfuls of them rather uncomfortably over their heads and shoulders (crazed Lon Chaney was particularly skilled at this). Gamblers, hair on end and eyes starting from their heads, muttered and mouthed at the gaming tables, watched by scornful and elaborately bejewelled *poules de luxe* while

they plunged ever more heavily and disastrously.

In these respects the Monte Carlo casino came as a disappointment. No shouts of despair: no crazed punters; no *poules de luxe* or otherwise. The croupiers looked like eminent French cabinet ministers who had decided to retire and go into the undertaking business: black suits, white shirts, black ties. The lofty rooms and the dim lighting were churchlike and the hushed voices and general air of dedication reminded one of a religious service. The worshippers at the tables showed no emotion. Triumph or failure, it seemed to be all one. I realised, with some astonishment, that gamblers only want to win in order to be able to continue gambling. The amassing of wealth doesn't come into it. Losing has a mere nuisance value as it removes them, for the time being, from the tables.

The surest way to lose at roulette is to play regularly and to have a system (the proprietors of casinos have all got A-levels in maths). The only way to win any sizeable amount is to risk all on just one spin of the wheel. The odds paid to winning gamblers are based on the assumption that there are 36 numbers. There are not. There are 37, including the dreaded zero. To popularise a

resort's casino by suppressing zero for a week or two (presumably by filling in its little slot and denying it the ball) increases the chance of a win. Hence Keynes's excitement and the midnight Channel crossing.

It was, up to a point, a success story. They each won £40, and in the days when pounds were pounds, but it proved to be the Provost's undoing, though a perfectly happy one. Every vacation thereafter (wars intervening) he made a beeline for Monte Carlo. An impressive spectacle, and never averse to being *en évidence*, he sat at the tables in a sort of dusty fall-out of cigarette ash, biscuit crumbs and white hairs, a wild and storm-tossed King Lear. For him the thrill of gambling lay in actually putting the counters, 15 at a time when flush, on the table. Frequently, even if he could have chosen the number to come up he would have won nothing. He betted against himself.

From time to time he ran out of money and one had, if near at hand, to lend him more ('Bless you, dear boy!'). Sometimes he was found, quite innocently, attempting to remove somebody else's winnings ('Pardon!') and there was a momentary unease at the table. No race can sniff as disapprovingly as the frogs. Occasionally the injustice of the world in general and of casinos in particular would overwhelm him. The years of study devoted to becoming a distinguished Greek scholar had left little time for other languages and he had to manage as best he could, exiting from the building with a loud cry of '*Maisong de voleurs!*'

As the Cambridge term approached, his gambling friends had to remind him of the date, then to pack his things (heavy woollen underwear, flannel shirts, starched butterfly collars, serviceable black boots) and then to get him, loudly protesting, to the Monte Carlo station and push him into the train. The first attempt at getting him back to King's always failed. His conscience, we must assume, struggled with the gambling urge but lost the brief battle. At Nice the Provost would alight, speedily change platforms and come blithely winging back to Monte Carlo on the next available train, chuckling loudly at this irresponsible and juvenile prank.

Freud who, if really pushed, could find sexual significance in a spoonful of cold mashed potato, unearthed all sorts of concealed sublimations in gambling – the flutter of hands dealing cards (masturbation), the pushing to and fro of the croupier's rake (copulation), the rattle of dice in a box and the click of the ball in the wheel (assorted aberrations). It is true that Dostoevsky, a life-long roulette buff, reported to his wife that he experienced sexual stimulation when losing large sums, a treat not hard to come by. And it is always said that devoted gamblers make, when in the home, listless lovers.

None of this stuff applied to the Provost. He was a character in a Greek tragedy, pitting himself, knowing he would lose, against the Fates, those dreary spinning ladies who so seldom spin anything remotely pleasant. The certainty of failure was somehow reassuring and in no way lessened the feeling of painful excitement, a feeling, come to think of it, not unlike that experienced when falling in love. Perhaps Freud was right after all.



Letters to the Editor

Is This Socialism?

Sir, Eric Heffer says (NS 6 February) that 'to suggest that socialism cannot be equated with a democratic society if the economy is basically collectivised is wrong. So wrong in fact that it undermines the whole struggle for socialism'. In the remainder of his article he 'in fact' has no facts but only feelings and faith to offer in support of his first assertion. Within a few sentences, defeated by lack of precedent or theory, he has to admit 'the real problem facing democratic socialists is how to create a society which will retain democracy, yet bring about fundamental changes'. He offers no solution to the problem but urges a leap of faith infinitely greater than the one he (and I) refused to take during the debate on Common Market entry.

The fundamental conflict between the totalitarian nature of Marxist philosophy and the pluralist tradition of Western liberal democracy renders them irreconcilable by definition. Whether 'democratic socialist' or communist, a Marxist who renounces the dictatorship of the proletariat, and *means* it, is no longer a Marxist because the only alternative is personal liberty and the free market albeit in a mixed economy. Frank Chapple has put it more boldly: 'There has to be an enforcement agency in a country; if it isn't the market it has to be the police force' (quoted in the *Observer*, 25 January). Mr Heffer and the New Left deal with the dilemma this raises for them by ignoring it and repeating their illogical assertions.

Mr Heffer claims an antipathy towards Eastern European communism, yet presumably he supports, as a member of the National Executive Committee, the NEC's decisions in the past year to establish fraternal relations on a party-to-party basis with the communist parties of the East German and Rumanian dictatorships. Mr Heffer's professed commitment to democracy will be tested when and if an elected government, determined to defend the plurality of interests and views in our society, resolves to oppose a sectional challenge to its authority. Judging by past performance, should we not assume his reaction will depend on the source of the challenge? He claims his idea of a socialist society and democracy are indivisible, but does he recognise that democracy presupposes devotion to the rule of law which is itself indivisible? Is this principle consonant with his views on Clay Cross, the Pentonville Five and the Shrewsbury Two? Or does anything go until the full socialist state is installed?

Mr Heffer is right about one thing. Any social democrat who has thought his position through is not a socialist in the Heffer sense. That chasm has always existed in the Labour Party, but bridging it even tactically is beginning to verge on the impossible and this does not seem to worry the extreme Left. Mr Heffer says there is a need for 'the fullest possible debate' in the party, not to win over social democrats but to attract young Marxists into the party from the various ultra-Left groups. No doubt they can be counted upon to assist in the overthrow of difficult right-wing MPs and in the selection of Marxists or malleable candidates to fill vacancies caused by sackings or retirements. Thus we are afforded one clue as to why the NEC refused to discuss the national agent's fully documented report on revolutionary Marxist infiltration of the Labour Party. The fact is that Mr Heffer and his friends are winning by organisation and attrition, not by debate. They control the

party's annual conference, the National Executive and the TUC General Council; in other words, every leading branch of the Labour movement but one: the Parliamentary Labour Party, and that is now their target. If MPs retiring at the next election are replaced by candidates of 'democratic socialist' views or willing to take orders from the Left-dominated party organisation, if the stoutest anti-Marxist MPs are ousted one by one by left-wing management committees with NEC backing, if the weak, frightened, confused, gullible or blind are progressively intimidated by the threat to their positions, career prospects and livelihood, so Mr Heffer's friends will draw nearer their goal.

His recent writings indicate he is confident this is happening. If he is right, the present party leader will be outflanked, outbid and outpatronaged where it counts most, in his own base, the PLP. Cowed non-Tribuneites will remain meekly on board the old gravy train as captive creatures, giving false assurance to traditional Labour voters come the general election that Labour is still the party of Attlee, Bevin and Gaitskell. The few outspoken social democrats will reinforce this phoney image if they stay, and cause Mr Heffer no qualms if they go. Labour may lose the next election, but the next Labour Government will be 'democratic socialist' and the new dark age will descend while Marxist intellectuals theorise aridly among themselves about the 'British experiment'.

However, before we reach this stage -- assuming Mr Heffer's dreams continue to materialise -- the Marxist Left will have to reckon with determined and remorseless opposition from the many social democrats who have no parliamentary career to protect and who will not accept party unity on Mr Heffer's terms. The Left may well find, in attempting to pervert the Labour Party into a vehicle for Marxism, that they permanently destroy its credit with the electorate before they can achieve their goal.

Members' Lobby
County Hall
London SE1

DOUGLAS EDEN

Sir, Of course Sir Keith Joseph can be proud of the technical and scientific genius of our forebears (Letters 27 February) but that does not entitle us to revere the economic and political regime, which, spurred on by Sir Keith's market philosophy, enslaved millions. No more than the modern Russian, who can glory in the achievements of Soviet science and technology, can *ipso facto* seek to justify Stalinism and bureaucracy.

What does disturb me, however, is that a leading Conservative can seek to whitewash the pre-war fascist regimes of Eastern Europe by referring to the supposed cultural, scientific, and press freedoms which he alleges existed in countries like Hungary and Rumania. One of the first acts of Antonescu in September 1940, having forced the abdication of the king, was to dissolve Parliament and have himself declared 'Leader of the State', ruling by decree. People were allowed to leave Hungary all right; some of them, particularly Jewish people, were given free transport -- to Auschwitz. There is now plenty of evidence to illustrate the vile nature of Hitler's friends such as those of the Arrow Cross in Hungary. Indeed, on 5 July 1944, in the House of Commons, Anthony Eden protested about the persecution of the Jews in Hungary.

It seems to me that what obscures Sir Keith's

vision is the narrow doctrinaire Tory conception of freedom. To the Tory 'tis better to be the street urchin in Hong Kong or the homeless family in Calcutta than the relatively socially secure and fully employed peasant or factory worker in Mao's China. What matters, it seems, is that the beggar be permitted his personal view of the arts and access to literature of all kinds. There, in the Tory view, goes the free man!

To British Labour Party socialists, democratic rights embrace both political and economic life. Socialism is the fulfilment of democracy in the social and economic sphere. Democracy cannot be allowed to end at the ballot box on polling day or at the newspaper stand. We have a long way to travel yet and Sir Keith should not regard the 60 per cent of GNP which is now disposed of by the state as necessarily tolling the death knell of capitalism. I wish it were so. He will know, however, that much of it goes directly to the private sector in an attempt to persuade and cajole it to act in the public interest. He will be fully aware that much of it also finds its way into the private sector by way of government contracts. There will no doubt remain private privileges for Sir Keith to champion for some little time yet.

It will also console him to know that the Liverpool Labour Party's protestations against inhumanity have been heard just as often in Moscow, Budapest and Prague as in Santiago, Washington and Pretoria. I referred in my previous letter to the nature of the pre-war regimes in the now communist countries in an endeavour to show that, contrary to Sir Keith's claim, freedom did not necessarily exist before what he calls 'revolutionary socialism' took over.

I found it touching that in his parting shot Sir Keith should express concern about the company which my comrades of the Liverpool Labour Party are keeping. I fear that I cannot console him on that subject. We are all very much birds of a feather and must remain, in the eyes of Sir Keith at least, a thoroughly bad socialist lot!

ROBERT N. WAREING
President

Liverpool City Labour Party
70 Victoria Street
Liverpool 1

St Paul's Decay

Sir, NEW STATESMAN readers working in Hammersmith and West London College found it hard last week to recognise their situation through Corinna Adam's eyes, blinkered as they seem to be by the 'conservationists' propaganda'. If she had looked at the college's five scattered buildings (all but one constructed in the 19th century for other purposes) and the four others in partial use for college classes, she might have understood why HM Inspectors scheduled them for replacement over 20 years ago, and why its new buildings have throughout the last four years been agreed at both national and local level as top priority for the Inner London further education building programme. But Corinna Adam chose not to visit the college; she probably does not know that staff and students using the Victorian orphanage which houses the Brook Green branch of the college have had the interesting experience over the last 12 months of attempting to carry on working after fire (probably caused by obsolete wiring) had destroyed the electrical power input, the canteen kitchen, the general office, and the two departmental offices and that reinstatement is still incomplete. She probably does not know that the 'wasteland', far from being caused by local authority disputes (the three authorities involved -- Hammersmith Borough Council, the GLC, and the ILEA -- have in fact been

agreed on the need for new college buildings on the St Paul's site since 1970), is the result of a general decision by the Heath government. The Barber expenditure cuts of December 1973 (remember them? – they cancelled all building) caught this particular college building the week before its contract went to tender, and three months before work was due to start; well before any local property holder decided that conservationist slogans might provide the way to any minister's heart.

Corinna Adam obviously does not realise the consequences of any further delay for the college's 16,000 students (full-time, part-time day and evening), some of whom, incidentally, come from the very school whose teachers seem most anxious to deny educational opportunities to their pupils in later life. She does not seem to be aware that the site has never at any time been in use as a public space. It is interesting to hear that there are 'many alternatives' for the college whose name she has not troubled to check: doubtless, but unfortunately they are not in Hammersmith, where even in good years many among a teenage population with one of the highest unemployment rates in London need further education to become employable. The small college of St Mark and St John is attractive as a college site to residents of such massive structures as the neighbouring 'Baron's Keep' because it is far away from them: the more appropriately sized area in the St Paul's site will be attractive to Hammersmith and West London College students because they will be able to get to it.

JANE KING
D. GRIEVSON
STEVE WILLIAMS
U. POLOZYNSKA
Hammersmith & West London College
50 Brook Green
London W6

J. C. N. BAILLIE
B. K. SMITH
J. R. PRICE
P. DE GORY

Neither Kith Nor Kin

Sir, Congratulations on the good sense of your front page article on Rhodesia (NS 27 February). I wish it had been a little more directly relevant to its title, and that you had added a warning that, in the next few months, this country is going to be under very heavy pressure from many quarters to give aid and succour to our 'kith and kin' in Rhodesia in a vain attempt to stem the tide of anti-colonialism. In the coming struggle we must be, and be seen to be, on the right side, namely on the side of the freedom of Africans from colonial rule. I am not saying that we should send men to fight in Rhodesia. We should not. But we should make it clear that we are on the side of the guerrillas, that we want the Smith regime to fall, and that, if we have to resume authority, we will bring about majority rule and proclaim the independence of Zimbabwe at the earliest possible date.

STANLEY PRICE
Newton-on-Ouse
York

Abortion and the State

Sir, It is 'nice' to see that Madeleine Simms approves of the Archbishop of Westminster's support for 'all freedoms'. I wonder which freedoms Ms Simms herself favours? Not, I suspect, 'a woman's right to choose'. In the *New Scientist* of 11 September 1975 Ms Simms wrote an approving review of a book which questioned whether this right should be upheld in the case, for example, of an older woman with a relatively high risk of bearing a mongol child. As this syndrome can now be diagnosed ante-natally, Ms Simms asked: 'Has she the "right" to choose to inflict this burden on the state?' As the sister of two mongols,

I bitterly resent the suggestion that children with this condition are to be killed off before birth because Ms Simms and her like are too mean to share in the responsibility of looking after them.

Later in the same review Ms Simms wrote: 'Any politician will be vindictively assailed (and has been in recent memory) who dares suggest that there are social high risk categories where further reproduction will almost certainly end in the state being handed a heavy burden for a life span.' In the circumstances it seems appropriate that you published Ms Simms's letter on the same page as one from Keith Joseph!

M. DENNEY

London SW19

Public Expenditure Cuts?

Sir, It is a pity that Mr James Fenton (NS 20 February) was not more scrupulous in imputing views to others. He accused me of wanting a reserve army of unemployed to be created. I entirely agree with Mr Fenton that 'this is an odd time to be talking about creating reserve armies'. What I wrote was that 'a reserve army of unemployed is needed', so as to make it physically possible for the excess of imports over exports to decline, for productive investment both to recover and then to rise well above its previous peak, and for personal consumption to recover and then begin again to rise at a modest pace. (*Lloyds Bank Review*, January 1976, page 10.)

Mr Fenton refrained from mentioning that I advocated tax concessions 'designed substantially to reduce unemployment'. My article was published before the appearance of the Government's White Paper on Public Expenditure. In that paper we read that public expenditure, in real terms, will continue to rise in the year 1976-77. It is only in 1977-78 that it is intended to try to stabilise – not cut – the total level of public spending, excluding interest on debt. The proposed level is 'still over 10 per cent higher than in 1973-74'. What right has Mr Fenton to refer to cuts in public expenditure?

RICHARD KAHN

King's College
Cambridge

Subsidising the 'Listener'

Sir, Crucifer began this exchange by asserting, *inter alia*, that BBC Publications 'showed a substantial loss for 1974-5 following another one in the year before that'. I replied that in fact they showed only very small losses in those two years, and referred him to the figures in the BBC Handbook. He now (Letters 20 February) quotes the relevant figures – on the two years taken together – a loss of £43,000 against a turnover of £30m., and asserts that I have either ignored or denied the facts! I leave your readers to judge which of us is guilty of 'careless abandon'.

More important, the losses in question should be viewed in the context of a long history of profitable trading and of the particular circumstances which caused them. The facts are that in the five years to 31 March 1975, BBC Publications made profits totalling some £4½m. – an average annual profit of £850,000. As for the period 1973-5, it was, as Crucifer of course knows, a difficult time for the publishing industry in particular: for instance, since the beginning of 1973 the price of newsprint has risen from just under £76 per tonne to a current price of about £170 per tonne, an increase of 124 per cent and at the same time other publishing costs were increasing sharply. These rapidly rising costs had to be faced when selling prices were first frozen and then strictly controlled. It is not a question of choosing to retire behind the

Prices Commission: it is a fact that we have been for some time, and still are, unable to increase our selling prices if and when we wish to do so. Also during the last two years the trading position of BBC Publications was worsened by loss of production and revenue as a result of various industrial disputes in the printing industry. It is clear that the small losses in these two years were caused by factors which were exceptional and outside the control of the BBC. I repeat – in the current year BBC Publications are likely once again to make a substantial overall profit as has been customary apart from the last two years; and thus the BBC's overall financial position, and with it the interests of licence-payers, will be enhanced and not diminished by its publishing activities.

KENNETH LAMB
Director, Public Affairs

BBC
Broadcasting House
London W1

CRUCIFER writes: This correspondence was started off by my asking what the current loss on the *Listener* was. At least we now have Mr Lamb's assent, if only through his eloquent silence on the point, to the fact that it must be 'nearly £120,000 a year'. Since we started off with a question, let us end with one. Would Mr Lamb now confirm that if the *Listener* even in 1973/4 and 1974/5 had been selling at a price comparable to that of other weeklies (unsubsidised by public funds), the losses that he now admits as having been made by BBC Publications in each of those years would thereby have been eliminated? A simple 'yes' or 'no' – or, better still, another silence – will do by way of answer.

Chinese Photographs

Sir, I am at present preparing for publication a collection of photographs illustrating aspects of everyday life in old China, covering the period 1860 to approximately 1920. I would be glad to hear from anyone who possesses photographs which might be considered for inclusion in this collection.

G. P. MCCORMACK

School of History
University of Leeds

Pioneering Japanologists

Sir, I am a Japanese historian studying the lives of the great pioneering Japanologists, W. G. Aston, Basil Hall Chamberlain, F. V. Dickens and John H. Gubbins. I should very much like to hear from their descendants, relatives, or anyone in possession of their private papers and letters. Any other information about these gentlemen would also be most welcome.

N. HAGIHARA

Room 247, The Times
New Printing House Square
Grays Inn Road
London WC1

Clients and Lawyers

Sir, While appreciating Crucifer's comments last week on the withdrawal of *The Joy of Sex* summons, may I correct an error of fact?

Mr Michael Rubinstein is not, as was stated, the solicitor for W. H. Smith, but for the book's publisher, Quartet Books. W. H. Smith's solicitors are, and have been for many years, Bircham & Co.

LAWRENCE HAMMOND
Public Relations Manager

W. H. Smith
Strand House
Portugal Street
London WC2

BOOKS & ARTS

Neal Ascherson

The Cossack Ponies

Fathers and Daughters: Russian Women in Revolution by CATHY PORTER *Virago* £5.95
Five Sisters: Women Against the Tsar by BARBARA ALPERN ENGEL and CLIFFORD N. ROSENTHAL *Weidenfeld* £6.50

All these girls were simply and smartly dressed, and against our will they attracted our attention. Some were so shy that when we spoke to them they lowered their eyes. They exhaled a country air, perhaps from some distant province. Certainly at least half these girls had never crossed the frontier of the so-called world.

They were about to cross it. These young girls, described by the Georgian revolutionary Dzhabadari as he encountered them in Paris in the early 1870s, were on the point of returning to Russia to turn the 'so-called world' of the tsarist autocracy into a new and real world of justice, democracy, equality and freedom. Their lives were to become meteor-trails of sacrifice, devotion, revolutionary ferocity and torment. Some died in Siberian prisons. Some, broken by what was done to them during years of incarceration, killed themselves. Some helped to carry the weapons and put together the bombs which killed a Tsar and many of his governors and policemen. A very few lived, as old women, to see the October Revolution and end their lives in the Soviet Union, a strange kind of paradise in which to find themselves white-haired angels.

They were a group of the Russian students from Zürich, the first generation of Russian girls to ignore the half-hearted concessions towards women's higher education made by the tsardom and to go abroad for a full university course of study. Zürich found them a weird sight, androgynous with their cropped hair, long boots, large blue spectacles and incessant cigarettes, and called them *Kosakenpferdchen* – the Cossack ponies. They had taken a political decision even by coming abroad, against the entreaties of their petty-landowner parents: in Switzerland, they were more deeply politicised by Bakunin and Lavrov and – above all – by each other. They had spent months of nights arguing and laughing and smoking and grabbing down books from shelves for quotes. Now St Petersburg had ordered them home, telling the world that they were using their scientific skills to perform abortions on each other. And they came home, carrying in them the living embryo of the revolution.

Both these books have been written to 'rescue' the part played by women in the Populist movements of the late 19th century, and to draw attention to the Russian women's struggle which preceded and flowed into Populism. Cathy Porter suggests that women have been 'consistently deleted' from the historical record of these

times. This is not strictly true. Vera Figner, Vera Zasulich and Sofya Perovskaya – who died on the public gallows for the assassination of Alexander II – are well known to and well honoured by Russians today, and anyone who takes the slightest interest in revolutionary history. But it is true that many others, sometimes more influential, have been to some extent forgotten: Olga Lyubatovich, Gesia Gelfman, Sofya Bardina. And the period of the women's movement, the significance of the struggle for women's rights and emancipation both in itself and as a major influence on the attitudes of the revolutionary groups of the Sixties and Seventies, has not been given proper attention. Alix Shulman, in her introduction to *Five Sisters*, is mostly justified in complaining that Franco Venturi's major work on Populism, *Roots of Revolution*, undervalues this.

The trouble is that – very understandably – neither of these books confines itself to the women's movement. In both, the Zürich girls and their part in the terrorist groups of the late Seventies and early Eighties take a central part. The books end, as Populist terrorism ended, on the St Petersburg scaffold with the killers of Alexander II. Yet the Zürich girls, as Dzhabadari saw them about to set out upon their terrible and glorious course, stood at the end of the feminist movement as a distinct strand in Russian revolutionary history. They had turned their backs on ten years and more of work by older sisters at home for women's academic education. The argument over 'separatism', over whether women should have their own political organisations and circles to which men were not admitted, had been sorted out in the first years at Zürich, and they were clear that although they intended to carry out revolutionary propaganda work among women workers in Russia when they returned, they were common comrades in a single battle for the emancipation of workers and peasants rather than in a narrower fight for the rights of women.

It is Cathy Porter, in her highly intelligent, learned and sometimes witty book, who makes the effort to put the Populist women into their historical context. The Orthodox ideal of woman as a sort of pious cow survived into the 19th century, only superficially affected by the girls' schools established by royal command at the Smolny Institute and the Maryinsky Institutes, and by the search of lonely enlightened princes for *amitié amoureuse* and for brides with something more than 'accomplishments'. Matters developed faster in the middle of the century, though again largely through men forcing their own progressive fantasies upon women. Belinsky got it right as early as 1839, when he said that,

if in all matters woman stands lower on the ladder of moral development, it is not because of her nature but the defects of men's brute material force, the semi-barbaric, somewhat oriental structure of society, and the sickly, arcadian education given to women.

There followed the wild, noble optimism of the Sixties, a false dawn of a decade. Mere sexual equality seemed to be one answer: let women be like men. Chernyshevsky and Shelgunov and their young intellectual followers diligently coaxed their wives to take lovers when they fancied. As one critic said, this was 'the petty right of "free love", which is nothing more than the right of always selecting her master'. Hundreds of provincial middle-class girls – who as women had no civil right to papers – were offered fictitious marriages by young radicals so that they could acquire identity cards and come to the cities. They came, and settled in little communes in flats about St Petersburg, 'nihilists', 'salon democrats' and 'liberal day school girls', learning to live as sisters with each other and with men, learning to be poor and to discuss and to feel sorry for those who had the misfortune to fall in love. The plain little dresses, the blue spectacles, the short hair were their way of saying that revolution was simplification. Smart St Petersburg goggled, then mimicked them: the *Nigilistka* look became fashionable.

These were also the years of campaigning for women's education. Three well-off ladies, Stasova, Trubnikova and Filosofova, became the 'Triumvirate' of the movement, opening schools and cajoling ministers until by the end of the decade the first semi-official courses for women at something like university level were opened. The Triumvirate achieved much, but their political moderation and their word-in-the-right-ear methods gradually alienated the far more radical young. In 1867, Nadezhda Suslova, at only 24, qualified as a doctor of medicine in Zürich. The migration abroad, and with it the end of the self-conscious women's movement as such, was imminent.

The age of all-out struggle, in which women took part as full comrades with men, was opening. The beautiful young girl seen leading a women's platoon on the barricades of the Paris Commune was Elisaveta Dmitrieva, a 20-year-old Russian. The Zürich girls went home to agitate as factory workers among the masses, soon to be rounded up and to astonish Russia by their courage and faith in the dock at the 'Trial of the Fifty'. Others became part of the so-called Chaikovsky Group, studying revolution and 'going to the people' in remote villages. Thousands of them and their sympathisers were detained in the repression which culminated in the 1877 'Trial of the 193'.

There now arose what Venturi called 'the first real revolutionary party' in Russia, 'Zemlya i Volya' (Land and Liberty). All these groups and their subsequent descendants now fall under the historian's heading of 'Populism', the revolutionary approach which identified the peasant as the principal actor in the transformation of Russia and, in different degrees, regarded the primitive communal institutions of village life, the *artel* or the *obshchina*, as the nucleus of a future society based upon

agrarian communism. Marx, though respected, seemed a gradualist; the message of Bakunin that immediate agitation and action could produce results was far more attractive. But the 'going to the people', described by Turgenev in *Virgin Soil* and *Rudin* with an insight no historian can match, had failed to produce results by the end of the Seventies. Vera Figner argued that 'our cause in the countryside' was lost not because of lack of interest or because the agrarian programme was wrong, but because 'what was lacking was political freedom' to transform mass support into effective action. Terrorism against the Government and its representatives was held, in the Russian context, to be the only means of bringing about such political change. 'Terror,' she said, 'was intended to create opportunities for developing the faculties of men for service to society.' Isaiah Berlin puts it: 'The society for which violence was to blast the way was to be peaceful, tolerant, decentralised and humane. The principal enemy was still the State.'

In the terrorist movements, women took a full part. Sofya Perovskaya helped to dig tunnels for mines, lay in the bushes to detonate explosives under Royal trains, and went to the gallows for leading the assassination of Alexander II. Vera Zasulich shot Trepov, the brutal Governor of St Petersburg. Vera Figner worked all night to fill and prime the grenades which killed the Tsar. Elizaveta Kovalskaya was co-founder of the 'Union of Russian Workers of the South' in Kiev, which could draw as many as 700 workers to illegal meetings.

Five Sisters uses the memoirs of five of these women to tell of their revolutionary formation and experience. 'Use' is the right word: the texts have been pasted together from different works and fragments to form continuous autobiographical narratives. They make wonderful reading, although this presentation reduces their usefulness to a historian. Cathy Porter's is the more critical and complete work, which brings into proportion the significance of the women's movement and the development of political terrorism. Without distorting history, she rescues the women's struggle in Russia from the dismissive 'bourgeois minority interest separated from the larger revolutionary movement' defined by modern Soviet historians. In the end, these women liberated themselves – if not all Russian women – in common political struggle. Vera Zasulich understood this as a lonely, bookish child on a remote estate: '... the distant spectre of revolution appeared, making me equal to a boy.'

Among this week's contributors:

NEAL ASCHERSON is the author of *The King Incorporated: Leopold II of the Belgians* and *The French Revolution 1789-93: The Times Reports*.

PETER JENKINS is the political commentator of the *Guardian* and author of *The Battle for Downing Street*.

OLEG KERENSKY's last book was *Anna Pavlova* (Hamish Hamilton 1973). He is at present writing an account of the new British dramatists.

Peter Jenkins

Accident Man

A Ford, Not a Lincoln by RICHARD REEVES
Hutchinson £3.95

What LBJ really said was 'Jerry Ford is so dumb he can't fart and chew gum at the same time'. Richard Reeves's anecdotal account of President Ford's first hundred days, hardly a heroic subject, confirms Johnson's unfavourable verdict. No hidden depths are discovered in America's first unelected Vice-President become President; the anti-hero is as uninteresting at the end of his biography as at the beginning; the events, such as they were, and indecisions of his hundred days require no delving by the political reporter: a bare chronicle of ineptness tells all. The only reason for reading this book, which is largely lacking in literary merit or political acumen, is that it is the only work available on the man who could still, astonishingly, be nominated by his party and become, this time by choice of the people, President of the US.

President Ford, everybody agrees and so does Reeves, is a 'nice guy'. Everybody likes him, or at least nobody hates him, and he likes everybody; he even liked Nixon. The nicest nice guy anecdote is about how, when Vice-President, he wanted to holiday humbly in California but Nixon made the Fords stay with the Annenbergs. 'We loved it,' he told the press afterwards. No they didn't:

They hated it. The Annenberg servants ordered the Fords not to touch objets d'art, warned them not to take photographs inside the house, objected to their children's life style (which included one son's live-in girl friend), and refused to let Secret Service agents come inside for a glass of water in the 90-degree desert sun.

Some facts about him which would be interesting if he were interesting include these: he was an adopted child but didn't know it until his real father suddenly showed up one day when he was 17; it took six years to cram him through Yale Law School; as a Congressman he made 238 out-of-town speeches a year; as President he rises around 5.30 or 6 a.m., rides one mile on a stationary bike, ties a 40-pound weight to his left leg and a 25 to his right (does he wear them all day?) and does 20 push-ups and 20 sit-ups; he prays as frequently as he exercises; he keeps a bust of Harry Truman in his office and has a joke writer on his staff; his television adviser won't allow him to eat within two hours of a TV appearance lest he should burp on the box. (Question: can he burp and chew gum at the same time?)

The book adds little to existing knowledge about the circumstances of Ford's appointment as Vice-President. It confirms that Nixon didn't want him; he wanted John Connally and took some persuading that there would be no chance of Congress confirming him. However Ford had been a willing Administration stooge on the Hill and as Vice-President gave Nixon some

reassurance that he would never be impeached; from time to time he would roar with laughter and ask 'Can you imagine Jerry Ford sitting in this chair?'

Nor does the book throw new light on the pardon although the circumstantial evidence it rehearses points to some kind of tacit understanding obtained by Alexander Haig that if Nixon gave way he would be let off. Reeves sees the decision as a political error which abruptly ended Ford's honeymoon with the press and caused his Gallup rating to plummet. A more generous interpretation might see the pardon as Ford's sole imaginative act of statesmanship which, although politically unpopular, was in the interest of the nation. Unfortunately he did not follow it through; he never tried to convey to the American people the magnitude of the crimes which he was pardoning, probably because he did not have the wit to grasp it. He simply went on repeating that Watergate was of the past. Nor did he have the will or the authority to purge the Nixon White House as quickly or as thoroughly as was necessary both in order to impress upon the public the extent of its corruptness and in order to establish his own authority and demonstrate some capacity for decision. From these first feeble days he has never looked forward.

Reeves, who reported Ford as both Vice-President and President for the *New York Times*, sub-titles his book 'The Decline of American Political Leadership'. He concludes, 'Gerald Ford is the future.' But Ford was an accident. However depressed may be the quality of American leadership, and for whatever reasons (the author offers nothing worth the name analysis), Ford proves nothing. Although from the White House he may conceivably be elected President in November it is inconceivable he could have been elected from Grand Rapids, Michigan. War and Nixon are the source of America's ills and Ford the legacy of those subversive happenings. He is not the future, he is the living past.

The author's approach to political writing is uncongenial although he is no more than a light muckraker. He quotes with approval Auberon Waugh's typically snide and silly remark that 'no one is attracted to a political career in the first place unless he is socially or emotionally crippled'. The cynicism and destructiveness of the political press in the United States is another unfortunate legacy of war and Watergate. Reeves admits:

I do have a bias in writing about politicians. I don't feel any great obligation to recount their many and varied personal and professional virtues. That is what they, or the taxpayers, are paying for in salaries and fees of press secretaries, media advisers, and advertising agencies. Believe me, there is nothing good about Jerry Ford, Nelson Rockefeller or any of the Kennedys that the American people have not been told...

The investigative fashion, all the rage in American journalism at the moment, has driven out understanding. Ford's contribution to the rehabilitation of the American system of government has not been a great one but he has done no worse than much of the political press which seems to have forgotten that there is a positive as well as a negative side to its Jeffersonian role.

Russell Davies

The Blood Donor

Hancock: A Personal Biography by FREDDIE HANCOCK and DAVID NATHAN *Coronet* 60p
Tony Hancock by PHILIP OAKES *Woburn Press* £2.95 and *Futura* 95p
Hancock's Half Hour by RAY GALTON and ALAN SIMPSON *Woburn Press* £2.45 and *Sphere* 95p

The lines which instantly recall Tony Hancock, the ones through which even the worst Hancock-imitation proclaims itself, are call-signs of protest: the reasonable man announcing that enough's enough. The laughs arise from Hancock's regarding himself as a reasonable man. Simpson and Galton, the script-writers, would dot these conversation-stoppers very carefully about, as the herbs and spices of a scene, as it were; but taken out of context they are still piquant. You have to give each word its own thunderstruck emphasis, as in 'Do you mind?', which was constantly in use during the partnership with Sid James; or 'the man's a buffoon', a phrase which may well have been responsible for rescuing a pleasant old noun from passing into archaism. 'Have a care, my good man' came in several equivalent forms, and generally preceded some preposterous vaunting of Hancock's connections in high places, or his awesome record as a pugilist, intellectual, gourmet, etc. 'Fools!' spoke for itself, and coincided with a facial expression blacker than the famous homburg; so did 'This is madness!' and its variants. 'Oh this is ridiculous' invariably signalled that conversation had dropped below the level required by a man of Hancock's 'calyber', who would now head off home to read some Bertrand Russell. Best of all, there was 'Have you gone raving mad?', which was not a question, but a sort of verbalised mood-swing, marking the moment when the other person's stupidity struck Hancock as so sublime that he began to get a strange joy out of it.

This character of Hancock's – an unrepeatable mixture of raging conventionalism, virtuoso malingering and delusions of grandeur – appeared too soon. If it was a wild success in the Macmillan era, when library-goers were queuing for *Lolita*, heaven knows what breadth of appeal it might have attained in the pot-bound, après-Nixon, Linda Lovelace generation. As it is, recordings of the Greatest Hits are still selling heavily; and a Hancock impersonation, I notice, has crept (back?) into the Mike Yarwood repertoire. The Lad is much missed. But then The Lad, the Hancock character we all relished, was already much missed in his creator's lifetime. By 1968, the year of Hancock's death in Australia, the British public had had all the evidence it needed that Hancock's was a wrecked talent. 'Things seemed to go wrong too many times,' he wrote in a suicide note; and that was a feeling shared in the mid-Sixties by millions of his admirers, too often regaled with Hancock's stand-by stage material: the

cod Shakespeare, the Robert Newton, the Quasimodo, the bezazzful belting-forth of 'No business like show business', ending abruptly with the sullen curse, 'What a load of old rubbish'. Nobody could assert that Hancock was constitutionally incapable of doing newer, brighter material, especially while his very funny series of Egg Marketing Board commercials with Mrs Cravat kept the memory of a fully operational Hancock alive. But neither was anyone in doubt that the way he hugged his favourite old variety turns to himself indicated a real regression to a private world where the guying of obsolete, tatty burlesques provided not only performance material but a kind of comfort.

Every licence-holder in the land is familiar with the view that it was Hancock's dismissing his proven script-writers that made his decline inevitable. He gave a good thing away, and by the time he was willing to ask for it back, Galton and Simpson had *Steptoe and Son*, another full-time success, to cope with. From the viewer's standpoint, there was perhaps not much more to be said. But it is clear from these three currently available books on the man that Hancock's homing back to the solitary state was a deeply instinctive business, more panic than bravado – in fact just the kind of superstitious retreat he made famous through the likes of the Blood Donor: 'I'm sorry. I'm not walking around with an empty arm for anybody.' There were certain articulate reasons why he did not wish to persist with the known character – too parochial, he said, after his film *The Rebel* had failed to conquer America – but it was a strange idea of progress that made his next project *The Punch and Judy Man*.

I think it ought to be said in Hancock's favour that to be written for by the telly-age G & S must have become a daunting experience as well as an exhilarating one. To judge by their interviews, Galton and Simpson, besides being physically the most intimidating script-writers in the world, have struck up between them an eerie atmosphere of psyche-swapping partnership that would almost inevitably terrify the loner Hancock. His flight from self-knowledge, moreover, would be constantly blocked by the chunks of himself that these two very acute and observant writers would strew in his path by way of material. Once the laughter had died away, he can't have been very happy with the notion of himself suggested, for example, by the bombastic Thespian-figure in *The Bowmans*. This is a funny script in which many unhappy portents congregate: the pilchard-advert scene, the failed audition scene, the egocentricity of the dénouement. Innocent lines are close to the bone. 'My accent is perfect,' Hancock the ham insists. 'I spent six months in Somerset on a cider farm perfecting it.'

As Philip Oakes recalls, Hancock could just occasionally be caught relishing the big-deal surroundings of show-business, and ad-

About Oxford Books

Dakar fiasco

Operation Menace was the code-name for the ill-fated Dakar expedition of September 1940, when an Anglo-Free French force, with de Gaulle aboard, unsuccessfully attempted to detach the French in West Africa from their adherence to the Vichy Government. Churchill's boundless energy and drive breathed life into Menace; it was undertaken on his insistence, against all professional advice, and it was a failure. **Operation Menace** by Arthur Marder, £7.50, tells the fascinating story of an operation that 'exemplified, in its genesis, planning and execution, all that can go wrong in warfare; an operation fouled-up by unforeseen contingencies, the accidents of war and human error, and against a background of undue political interference, inadequate planning, and half-baked cooperation between Allies'. Writing about the book in *The Observer*, A. J. P. Taylor called it 'a story ready-made for Arthur Marder with his profound grasp of British naval affairs and his gift of vivid presentation. Marder has studied the British records meticulously and talked to many of those involved. As usual with his books, one feels this is the last word on the subject'.

Tom Paine

On January 9 1776 one of the most remarkable political pamphlets in the history of English writing appeared in Philadelphia. **Common Sense**, a forceful and brilliant argument for the independence of the American colonies from Great Britain and the superiority of republican government over hereditary monarchy, had an enormous impact on the subsequent decision for independence. The author of **Common Sense** was Thomas Paine, 'a gentleman', as John Adams described him, 'about two years ago from England, a man who has genius in his eyes . . . I know not whether any man in the world has had more influence on its inhabitants or affairs for the last thirty years than Thomas Paine.' Universal agreement exists on the importance of Paine's writings; much mystery still surrounds the man and his career. In **Tom Paine and Revolutionary America**, £7.75, Eric Foner answers many questions about this interesting, enigmatic, radical leader who so profoundly influenced the events of his time and who said: 'A share in two revolutions is living to some purpose'.

. . . and other emigrants

About two per cent of the entire population of England emigrated between 1590 and 1640, mostly to the new world called America. **Vexed and Troubled Englishmen**, by Carl Bridenbaugh, paperback £2.95, is their story. 'In this admirable book Bridenbaugh draws a wonderful portrait of the society that forced Englishmen to emigrate. The beginnings of American history are traced with a scholarship that is as enviable in its range as in its appositeness.' – J. H. Plumb in the *New York Times Book Review*.

mitting to 'just a touch' of megalomania. What delusions he had must certainly have tended towards the grand. But his main and public problem seems to have been deep uncertainty over the kind of entertainer he was. Even in his *Educating Archie* radio days, he was already a comedy actor rather than a comedian; but in earning his own radio show and transferring to TV he became trapped in a character which – because he insisted increasingly on 'closeness to life' – came to reflect too faithfully his own inescapable foibles. He became virtually type-cast as himself-in-a-bad-mood, which is why, in those last horrible commercial TV series, he was to be found introducing variety acts with the same jaundiced phraseology ('Just the usual load of rubbish') he had lavished on the chip-papers and pools coupons of *Railway Cuttings*.

The nearest we now have to a performer in Hancock's position (but emphatically not his style) is John Cleese, who has expressed a similar impatience with the mechanics, economics and publicitarian hoo-hah of his profession, and whose *Fawlty Towers* persona, deranged though it can be, is easily the best new form of concentrated, pathos-hating misanthropy invented since Hancock's day. Fortunately for Cleese, he is intellectually distanced from his material (and Bertrand Russell's) by the kind of education Hancock was highly conscious of having missed; he writes at home, with his wife; and above all, he was not brought up in a Bournemouth hotel frequented by touring variety artistes. Hancock was (so he would have been well qualified to play a downbeat Basil Fawlty, come to think of it); and what he inherited from that environment was an honourable but, in an ambitious man's terms, doomed idea of the comedian's integrity – the single-character, 'this is my act' school. Television took him right away from that, into a critical, indeed painfully self-critical form of comedy, and he never got back. The incompatibilities of two eras simply fought to a standstill within him. The last shot from his uncompleted Australian series shows him once more imprisoned in a meagre bed-sitter. He never really had an act, just a marvellous kit of attitudes. He looks terribly exhausted.

Oleg Kerensky

Jumpers

Diaghilev Observed by Critics in England and the United States 1911-1929 by NESTA MACDONALD *Dance Books* £10.50 till 30 April, then £12.50

Nijinsky Dancing by LINCOLN KIRSTEIN *Thames & Hudson* £12.50

Bookseller at the Ballet: Memoirs 1891-1929 by CYRIL BEAUMONT *C. W. Beaumont* £7.50

Diaghilev's achievements were, first the introduction into Western Europe of Russian painting, music, opera and ballet – which until then had been unknown – and secondly, the development of ballet along new paths as a serious art form. He was helped by one of the most formidable arrays of talent ever assembled. The man who believed that ballet should not be just a vehicle for stars or for showing off technical tricks presented some of the greatest stars in the history of ballet, starting with Pavlova, Karsavina and Nijinsky, to say nothing of the choreographer Fokine. Later, novelty and the desire to shock sometimes seemed to become ends in themselves; NESTA Macdonald points out that in the Twenties his company did just about everything which is now considered avant-garde, except dancing in the nude or to electronic sound. And it emerges from her enormous collection of press reactions that some of the costumes worn, actions performed and music played seemed more shocking to audiences then than nudity and the most experimental sound effects do today.

Diaghilev himself was no dancer, composer or designer. Yet, as Miss Macdonald puts it:

he composed pictures with dancers who moved; he found artists of brilliance, many young and little known, gave them a large canvas and brought them to prominence; he found old music and commissioned new for his pictures to dance to.

He was, apparently, a master of stage lighting:

he knew how the same scene could be changed from brilliant to sombre, from exciting to menacing, from dawn to dusk, according to the subtle combinations of lights he threw upon it.

Having sketched in the background, Miss Macdonald presents Diaghilev's contemporary critics. Her book is an enormous anthology, very lavishly illustrated with photos, drawings, and endless posters, programmes and business letters. The research involved in finding and selecting all this material has been prodigious, though the book does not altogether escape the danger of being swamped by it.

Perhaps the most valuable lesson is that ballets which are now unthinkingly accepted as masterpieces, or written off unseen as obvious failures, aroused much more mixed opinions when they were new. The controversies over *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune* and *Le Sacre du Printemps* are famous; they are filled out here with fascinating new detail. I had not realised that *Scheherazade* was considered scandalous in the United States for racial reasons; eventually the lecherous black slave had to be almost white. (Curiously there was no objection to the Blackamoor in *Petrushka*.) Some of the later works evidently had more merit than they are generally credited with now. I would be particularly curious to see Nijinska's *Romeo and Juliet*, with music by Constant Lambert, in which, when Romeo and Juliet come to the part where they are supposed to die, they (as Karsavina put it) 'decide to do nothing of the sort, but to elope in an aeroplane instead'.

Diaghilev's biggest failures were his attempts to interest the London public in revivals of *Giselle* and *The Sleeping Beauty*. Both of them were regarded by critics at the time as hopelessly old-fashioned, and a return to the discredited type of ballet Diaghilev was supposed to have overthrown. In fact his pioneering of these classics has proved even more influential and far-sighted than his more obviously revolutionary works.

Miss Macdonald fills in bits of political and social background and gives some amusing details. When Preobrajenska presented a potted version of *Swan Lake* at the London Hippodrome, the printed programme improbably guaranteed:

Every artiste appearing is able at a moment's notice to take the part and do the work of any other in the ballet. This is a *sine qua non* with every artiste before he or she is allowed to take the smallest part in any ballet.

When the Diaghilev ballet first appeared at Covent Garden, the demand for seats was so great that the management suddenly increased the prices 'for all except those who have already paid', a practice which not even the most commercially-minded management would surely dare attempt today.

Mr Kirstein's book does not have quite as many pictures, but they are even larger and more lavishly presented. He is not afraid to make his own controversial judgments of Nijinsky, aided by contemporary accounts. In some ways a clearer picture

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of Nijinsky's dancing and choreography emerges than from Miss Macdonald's more impersonal method, though Mr Kirstein's style is sometimes obscure and his picture is not an eye-witness one. For a coherent first-hand view we must turn to Mr Beaumont's memoirs, which include his previously out-of-print *The Diaghilev Ballet in London*. He is much more than the book-seller of his title; he is doyen of ballet critics and the author of that still invaluable work of reference, *The Complete Book of Ballets*, and its various supplements. He writes charmingly and with gentle humour about his life and friends, many of whom were dancers who visited his shop, and his descriptions of the ballets, fitted into the framework of his story, are as detailed and evocative as anyone could wish.

Alan Ryan

Top of the Class

Education, Inequality and Life Chances
2 vols *OECD Paris* £10.60

It is not exactly an indictment of the reading habits of the British public to suggest that most people would curl up with the papers presented to an OECD seminar only if they were suffering from a bad bout of insomnia, and were looking for cure rather than consolation. In fact, these two volumes ought to keep most of us awake at night, partly because of what they tell us about the apparent irrationality of the distribution of income, wealth, access to education and so on, and partly because of what they tell us about our inability to predict the outcome of any attempt to create either greater social mobility or a more egalitarian distribution of all these things. Those who followed the deliberations of our own Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth will not be surprised to find that the only agreed proposition in the two volumes is that all available figures ought to be treated with extreme caution – since annual figures don't tell us enough about life cycle earnings, for example, and money incomes, even when adjusted for taxes and transfer payments, don't tell us enough about the distribution of welfare or real income.

The setting of the papers is familiar enough. The old and optimistic liberal doctrine suggested that education was the route to social mobility on the one hand, and to greater equality on the other; not merely was it the route that the development of an increasingly elaborate industrialised economy dictated, it was also the route that minimised the costs of social change. Attempts to restructure society by more directly political means, such as the forced redistribution of property, or by massive income transfers through the tax system, were likely to create social unrest on a scale which made such an attempt a bad bargain even for the supposed beneficiaries; and one source of uneasiness very obvious

in these papers is the fear that if writers such as C. R. Jencks are right, and education is an extremely inefficient instrument of egalitarian reform, governments are once again faced with the nasty task of judging their population's tolerance of these more overt measures. As Jacob Mincer points out here, the US government's efforts in the late 1960s were essentially ad hoc, and directed towards coping with small, peculiarly disadvantaged groups, such as the long-term unemployed in the Black inner city ghettos; no one suggested the sort of egalitarianism which would have required large sacrifices from those on or slightly above the average wage, and if anyone had, he wouldn't have got anywhere. The same is true of all the other OECD countries surveyed here.

The old and optimistic view held that education would have to become more meritocratic in order to provide the output of technical and managerial talent a sophisticated economy requires; and it was often held that this would also lead to greater equality by raising the wages of the less talented (or at any rate less trained) who would have become relatively less numerous. But, as A. H. Halsey makes clear in his discussion of the impact of education on social mobility in Britain, a lot of the causal connections assumed in the optimistic theory don't seem to hold. There is, he says, plenty of evidence that there has been increased recruitment into white collar professions from the children of blue collar workers; but this is not because of the improved educational opportunities for working-class children so much as the great increase in non-manual employment: 'the great underlying fact is the transformation of the occupational structure with its increasing opportunities for professional and technical work.'

No doubt there is a considerable body of evidence to show that the correlation between a high status occupation and an extended educational experience was high and increasing from the 1930s until recently; the role of that educational experience in deciding that its possessor would obtain a high status job is another and harder question to answer on the available evidence. The immensely lucid and useful background briefing supplied by the OECD secretariat shows sociologists and economists disagreeing about the role of education in accounting for income differences and, by extension, for major differences in job status – and the range of disagreement is impressive, with Mincer suggesting that educational attainment accounts for a shade over half of US income dispersion and Jencks venturing no figure at all, but arguing that 'education, family background and IQ together explain only 12-15 per cent of earnings'. In the British case, it seems that even while the connection between education and occupation is tightening, the impact of one's social origins on the level of education attained is so overwhelming that education in itself has had almost no discernible tendency to 'open' British society.

Much of this will not be news to those most concerned with education in an egalitarian society. Defenders of comprehensive schools who have now despaired of their doing very much to raise the educational

level achieved by working-class children, and who have pacified middle-class parents by pointing out that their children will come out on top of any known system, have long suspected what recent research has tried to demonstrate. But, of course, the next move, morally and politically speaking, is quite obscure; should we think of schools as having a primarily instrumental point: ten years hard labour to qualify for the good life upon release? If so, the figures collected by Jencks are worrying, since they suggest that the adult return on childhood misery is inadequate. Should they be seen as places where children get to know each other in a stress-free and classless environment? If so, everything we know about the educational difficulties of a school which is working against a hostile home environment suggests they will be a great disappointment.

And what sort of egalitarianism do we want anyway? Halsey calls John Rawls's supposedly egalitarian conception of 'justice as fairness' the foundation of a liberal-socialist theory about permissible differences in income and status; but Jan Pen follows many others in arguing that Rawls's criterion of accepting any inequalities which have a pay-off for the least advantaged might allow income differentials of any extent. No one tries to spell out in detail an account of *which* inequalities impermissibly diminish the self-respect of the worse off and which do not; poor tennis players are not humiliated by the existence of Jan Kodes and Jimmy Connors; are the

THE TIGER

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The Guardian

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HAMISH HAMILTON

drivers of Minis humiliated by the sight of their bosses driving Rolls-Royces? We seem to know very little about the impact of inequality on self-respect and yet, as socialists as varied as Marx and Tawney were at one in arguing, it is equality of respect which we want, and all other forms of equality are means to that goal. It is an alarming thought that even when the economists possess figures they regard as reliable guides to the distribution of income, we shall have to turn again to sociologists and philosophers to tell us how that matches the distribution of a legitimate, unbamboozled self-respect.

Susannah Clapp

Hitting the Low Spots

Wilt by TOM SHARPE Secker & Warburg £3.50

62: A Model Kit by JULIO CORTÁZAR Marion Boyars £4.95

Wilfred and Eileen by JONATHAN SMITH Hutchinson £3.75

Late, Late in the Evening by GLADYS MITCHELL Michael Joseph £3.25

Havoc in high places plays a large part in Tom Sharpe's style of humour. A supporter of that much-cherished figure 'the little man', he sends representatives of the apparently unregarded scurrying to wreak intricate or messy vengeance on the more obvious forces of pomposity, privilege or power, by means of ingenuity or simple tenacity: a dope with an elephant gun accidentally mows down large quantities of the South African police force; a gardener defends a stately home with baked beans, and sweeps off the lady of the house. Bullies and bureaucrats aren't so much ridiculed as trounced.

Typically, the title of his latest novel turns out to be not an instruction but a surname. Henry Wilt is a cowed but not an abject man. While his wife, a plump and enthusiastic seeker after truth, prosecutes pottery, oriental dance and the cleanliness of lavatories, Henry gives glum Liberal Studies lectures to apprentices at the local Tech, and slouches the streets brooding on the possibility that 'some not entirely fortuitous disaster' might befall Mrs Eva Wilt. Apparent disaster is rapidly ushered in by an American couple of elaborate Americanness, who persuade Eva that marital bliss – if it has to be had – should at least be 'supplemented orally', and introduce Henry to new humiliations at the vagina of a plastic inflatable doll. But when his trials result in a charge of murder, Henry comes into his own: assured for once of his own innocence, he dazzles himself and exasperates the police by a display of whimsicality and inconsequence which could be found inspiring, and goes from the station with a new view on both

Eva and the Tech. The resident Wilt guilt is banished – the tale is one of Wilt refurbished.

Much is made in *Wilt* of combinations likely separately to produce a stock giggle: a fundamentalist vicar and inflated contraceptives, gas-fitters and *Lord of the Flies*, a fat naked woman and a policeman. But the large-scale exuberance suggested by such contrasts frequently overshadows Sharpe's better effects – the dryness, for example, which has Eva 'staring into space, the space between the washing-up rack and the Kenwood mixer' – at the same time concealing some lack of energy. No one is very interested in anyone else in *Wilt* because no one is very interesting. After some appropriate snapping at proper targets – such as lecturers who pride themselves on their grasp of 'academic content' – there is little left but crossness and a wish to get one's own back. The pillow fighting is often rather peevish.

In a considerate though not altogether encouraging preface to *62: A Model Kit*, Julio Cortázar discusses the origins of his book (some remarks about fiction which occur in the sixty-second chapter of a previous novel), offers some comments on 'combinatory art', and outlines some of the flauntings of conventions (concepts of time, geography and freedom and so forth) which are to follow.

While not without its arduous aspects, his novel is more entertaining than these literary notes suggest. Despite appearances to the contrary, its cast – which includes a girl who paints gnomes, some aggressively hare-brained South Americans and the inevitable anxious interpreter – is surprisingly engaging in action: leaving and loving one another, inventing games and plotting paradigmatic jokes involving Neurotics Anonymous and the Courtauld gallery.

Their thoughts, positions and narratives shift and merge into each other and achieve some sort of objective, if intangible, patterning in a much-visited, rather dreary mental commune, stocked with Marienbad-like corridors, barge-scattered silent canals and streetcars in which, filled with the sense of an unknown but important assignment, characters glimpse, pass and miss each other. Though not totally dulled by familiarity, the responses these images evoke are in part merely automatic, and in general when the multiple-mirror effect of the novel slows down, a certain amount of routinely hectic breast-beating takes place. The translator takes himself to task for the 'ceaseless desire to understand, missing, perhaps, the obscure call or signal of the thing itself'. He is right to do so: the worst moments in this novel occur when people think they are seeing clearly – wishing to explain to a girl just how significant her recent loss of virginity is; suddenly recognising on the face of another an 'expression of primordial evil'. It is at its finest when characters see themselves only as flicked back and forth by the force of self-generated images – by the echoes of vampirism, basilisks, resemblances of face and sound, which recur in differing forms in Vienna, Paris and London – and when they know only that they are 'shovelling shadows back into the darkness'.

There is nothing unduly elaborate about

Wilfred and Eileen, the story of two good sorts who meet, marry and suffer with consistent frank-heartedness. At Cambridge in 1913, Wilfred feels oppressed by the relentless brilliance of his contemporary glittering-prize winners, though he enjoys 'seeing people smile as the subtle force of his remarks stole upon them'. He looks forward to dedicating himself entirely to seriousness and surgery in a London hospital, but finds that thoughts of Eileen steal between him and ambition: they go to the ballet, walk in the country with his spaniel and her peke – and finally marry in secret and meet in hotels. When Wilfred goes to the Front, Eileen worries and reads Arnold Bennett; when Wilfred is wounded, Eileen superintends his recovery and new life as bird-watcher and semi-invalid in Kent.

Jonathan Smith describes his book as an 'imaginative re-creation' of real events – and dedicates it to Wilfred and Eileen's daughters. This supplies poignancy, though not excitement. The book's quiet detail – Wilfred's 'bleary and irritable' expression on being wounded, the Harrods pendant bought for £5.17.6d – and its mildly administered surprises would easily disarm if drawn from a real-life grandmother, or if discovered direct in diaries and letters: they make for a flat though benign novel.

Old-fashioned decency – in particular, properness – also figures largely in Gladys Mitchell's fiftieth novel. *Late, Late in the Evening* is set in 'an indeterminate era, when hanging was still 'the punishment for murder', truant schoolchildren skulked in fear of the attendance officer, and offspring of the gentry had both bloater paste and jam for tea. It features the indomitable Mrs Bradley, Home Office psychiatrist and chum of children, assorted village characters, including one idiot, a family of carefully preserved nobility and two well-brought-up children who place a lot of store by promises made on their honour and on not buying chocolate on Sundays. Amid revelry in the village – looking back, the narrator counts the annual fair as 'one of the high spots in a moderately happy life' – and charades up at the Manor, two murders take place. The victims are of marginal importance, and not wholly likeable; the murderer is of dubious origins; the whole is idyllically unthreatening.

Elma Mitchell

The Silent Woman

This woman is carrying
Wood for a fire,
A pitcher of water
And bread – a loaf of bread.
These things are sacred.
She knows it, but says nothing.

She is not quite young,
She is tired,
She has walked for centuries
Carrying the sacred
Fire, bread, water
And never found words
To put them down.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Unhappy Few

Watch It Come Down and Tribute to the Lady Old Vic

What on earth would Lilian Baylis, the frumpy heroine of *Tribute to the Lady*, have made of the other offering to hit her beloved Old Vic last week? One imagines her glowering at Osborne's *Watch It Come Down* from inside her private box, and finally failing to curb that downright, nannyish voice of hers. 'Lot of spoiled crybabies,' she would have trumpeted. 'Should all be smacked on the BTM and sent to bed without their Ovaltine.' For Frank Finlay, playing a raddled film director, there might have been a curt, approving nod; but for Jill Bennett, the novelist who has become his second wife, one of those jolly put-downs – 'be careful you don't fall over, dear: I can't have broken porcelain cluttering up my nice clean stage'. And for Susan Fleetwood, Michael Gough, and the other members of what's supposed to be an artsy commune, huddled together in a converted railway station deep in Loamshire? Well, Lilian would get on to her private line to God and pray for their early deliverance:

I've told Him to send that nice, polite Mr Hall a really ripping new play with lots of lovely parts for you all – so chin up, best foot forward, and remember it's always darkest before the dawn.

Actually, *Watch It Come Down* is scheduled as part of the dawn of the new National Theatre in two weeks' time, a prospect that bewilders me. Is there any reason, apart from Osborne's reputation, why this ramshackle affair should be staged at all? And what is Osborne's reputation nowadays? According to my own barometer, it has been declining since *Inadmissible Evidence* in 1964. I came as a spotty youth to admire the bite and edge of his early work, and I've watched appalled as he's gradually transformed himself into the old, worn dentures of the British theatre, snapping peevishly at young women, young men, hippies, yuppies or whatever subspecies of humanity happens to be buzzing in the vague vicinity of his bonnet. His plays have increasingly tended to divide the universe into Us (or, as I've sometimes suspected, Me) and Them, respectively the guardians and enemies of civilised values whose precise nature he never bothers to define. I have a strong predilection for the curious, receptive, questioning dramatist, the sort who bases both his enthusiasms and his denunciations on human evidence clearly seen, intelligently assessed and articulately conveyed to the audience. Mr Osborne, crouched defensively in a corner with his thumbs in his ears and his fingers over his eyes, couldn't be confused with such an ideal.

A critic who leans over backwards to be fair is liable to end up resembling a dis-

oriented question-mark; but let me be as fair as I can. There's an unfocused pain about *Watch It Come Down* that has to be respected. It is a sad, anxious play, full of acidity, dyspepsia and middle-aged yearnings. But to go on to dub it a contemporary *Heartbreak House*, as some have done, strikes me as extraordinary. For one thing, it's surely impossible to accept this chattering, bickering conclave of scribblers, artists and (in Osborne's charmingly reiterated word) 'poufs' as a microcosm of cultured Britain. For another, the level of thought, argument and debate is, to put it mildly, low. There's plenty of Osborne invective, variously directed at do-gooders, 'virginal young nymphomaniacs', the rural population beyond the commune and the irritants within it, but it is rarely very witty or pointed. 'Isn't it time she had another rally?' asks one kind friend of another, 'or stuck humanity's sharp banner up some police horse's inciting arsehole?' That blend of the precious and coarse, the affected and contemptuous, is pretty typical of a not very Shavian evening.

A better comparison might be *Hay Fever*, rewritten by a strangely grouchy, woozy Coward. With their loud and public bickering, their determination to involve their guests in their private dramas, the couple played by Finlay and Bennett emerge as updated Blisses – more unattractive, more cantankerous, and at least as superficial. Indeed, the play confirms my suspicion that Osborne no longer has the objectivity, empathy or insight to create anything resembling a rounded, or even half-rounded, human being. His characters aren't born people: they stumble from the womb in the form of attitudes, commentaries, prejudices, snarky editorials and, just occasionally, eulogies or obituaries. They spend their time onstage, not living, but passing judgments and having judgments passed on themselves. They are commonly defined less by what they do than what others say about them. They are words, words, words. Take Michael Gough's Glen, a dying biographer, mocked as a 'lizardly posh old pouf' at first, but eventually hailed as the repository of civilisation's fading virtues: 'he preened his perverse English personality and grinned at everyone, and made them feel better.' Now, Mr Gough looks and sounds very serene on his deathbed, but never for a moment does he substantiate any such claim. And with so glaring a disparity between what we're invited to believe and what we're actually shown, how can we possibly be touched when the Grand Old Man finally croaks?

But Glen is not, I fear, the most obvious example of Osborne's failure to control character, tone and his audience's credulity. There's also Jo, whose function is to represent friendship, loyalty and love – and, more specifically, to cradle the sickly Mr

Gough, kiss the brittle Miss Bennett passionately on the lips, and tell the frazzled Mr Finlay that she's 'the seed in your earth', adding incongruously 'I shine upon you and you are there always'. Susan Fleetwood grapples boldly with such phrases, but she can't persuade us that the girl is anything but a succubus from some romantic corner of Osborne's imagination. When the play isn't bilious it is mawkish and, when it isn't either, it is awesomely paranoid. Neither the strident digs at 'this nasty brutish English country life' and 'the pigs who own and run it', nor the slaughter of Mr Finlay's dog by 'yobbos', could prepare us for the violence of the ending. Mr Gough dies, then Miss Fleetwood throws herself in front of a train, and then shots ring out, spraying her body, shattering the windows and critically wounding Mr Finlay. Sam Peckinpah is evidently out there, urging on an oafish and evil peasantry: what began as *Hay Fever* ends as *Straw Dogs*.

It's a similar dénouement to *West of Suez*, where, if you recall, blacks rushed across the stage and peppered poor Ralph Richardson, leaving someone to intone 'they've shot the fox' as the curtain solemnly fell. They are still out to get Us: We must cling together against Them. Miss Bennett makes the point pretty clearly over the expiring Finlay: 'Don't leave us. We all, *the few of us*, need one another.' Those italics are Osborne's, the choked cry of a man who, with no apparent justification, assumes that his characters are somehow superior to the rump of their fellow-citizens. To you and me they may just seem bitchy or maudlin or both: to him they are the crumbling bastions of English culture in a world which, as someone typically puts it, 'despises imagination and only gives instruction in orgasms'. What can I possibly add in the face of such presumption? Just this: a few rows ahead of me in the Old Vic sat Solzhenitsyn enigmatically watching. Here was a man with the scars, stature and sheer mental energy to pontificate about civilisation and be heard, no matter how questionable some of his conclusions. His presence seemed to put the blinkered, self-regarding cognoscenti onstage, not to mention the carpet-slipped prophet who had created them, into a pretty withering perspective.

Tribute to the Lady was a relief after this, though not exactly irrelevant to it. Admittedly, it was mainly an excuse for a cheerful, tearful end-of-term party for the National on its last night at the Vic. There was no Olivier; but the compensation was Finney, a plummy impresario, with Gielgud and Richardson, doing a little Shakespeare, and Peggy Ashcroft who put across Lilian Baylis's *bons mots* in a shabby-genteel voice, scowling and blinking from above a spectacularly shapeless cardigan. It was all very entertaining and, at the end, instructive too. Miss Baylis, we were reminded, created the Old Vic, not for the rich and culturally well-fed, but for the poor and deprived: her dream was of a National Theatre for the many, not the few. Peter Hall would do well to bear her words in mind when he moves his last bags, and his first plays, into the stately pleasure-dome on the South Bank next week. The grumpy elitism of *Watch It Come Down* is not, I hope, a taste of things to come.

Films

John Coleman

Two for Tea

Autobiography of a Princess Academy Two
Legacy Academy Two
Moses Dominion

India has always both fascinated and terrified me, with terror generally in the ascendant. It was with a sense of utter recognition that one first came upon Mrs Moore's hearing that ambiguous, despairing echo in the Marabar Caves; but then it was Forster's remarkable novel that, until fairly recently, rendered probably the subtlest account of the British presence in India. Since, we have had the home-grown films of Satyajit Ray and, again through Western eyes, the four Indian movies of James Ivory: *The Householder*, *Shakespeare Wallah*, *The Guru* and *Bombay Talkie*. Now we have his fifth and (although essentially a piece for two voices, set in a flat in Kensington) his richest and finest, *Autobiography of a Princess*. Anyone interested in the full story of how Mr Ivory was drawn into making this beautiful, glancing movie should rush out and buy a large-page paperback of the same name (Murray £3.50), subtitled 'Also being the adventures of an American film director in the land of the Maharajas': it has superb photographs of palaces and princes, the script of the film by Ruth Praver Jhabvala, and a wry, urbane text by Ivory which makes good use, in particular, of the printed reminiscences of Yvonne Fitzroy, Lady Reading's companion in the Twenties.

It was the discovery of masses of decaying home-movie footage in the cellars of various great palaces, some themselves decaying, that planted the seed for this deliberately equivocal new growth. The exiled daughter of a Maharajah, whose arrogant turbaned portrait dominates the room, is celebrating an annual event: a birthday tea for her dead father to which his one-time tutor and private secretary, Cyril Sahib, now aged, treks up from Turton-on-Sea. Madhur Jaffrey is the elegant, fastidious, somehow castaway princess, constantly lapsing into out-dated slang; James Mason the reclusive, shrunken, finally puzzled gentleman in retirement: and it is impossible to conceive of them apart from their roles, so perfect is their playing. Part of the 'treat' consists of the viewing of scraps of domestic documentary: durbars, processions, pig-sticking, polo, as well as a few clips from a BBC interview with assorted Indian aristocrats whose fortunes have altered. As the Princess and Cyril Sahib chat over and between these flickering images, it grows clear that nothing was ever clear. The venerated 'birthday boy' emerges as a womanising, bloodthirsty, teasing tyrant, fond of humiliating his tutor in public and ultimately disgraced in a sordid sex scandal in a London hotel (a swift visual reconstruction of this is the film's only mistake). And yet a tender streak is also sug-

gested: his thoughtfulness when Cyril Sahib's mother died, his desire for his daughter to have a European education. That both were, to a degree, his creatures is never in doubt. The Princess still speaks of him almost as a lover might; so, too, does his ex-tutor, betraying a near-fretfulness.

And gradually a difficult truth builds up, towards Cyril Sahib's confession that India – his India, for all its luxury – did for him, sapped his will and even his memory, so that the rituals and the parties began to run together, become more and more meaningless the longer he stayed. In a marvellous image, we catch a glimpse of his terror, at the burial places of the dead queens: 'I thought the cenotaphs themselves resembled vultures. Or some extinct species of bird comes to roost in the desert.' And this is exactly how they do appear, to us. The old man's small saving grace is his work (against the wishes of the Princess, who urges him to record life with father) on an Englishman called Dennis Lever, who stayed away from the palaces, built schools, sank wells, recorded the songs and stories of the villagers: it seems unlikely it will ever be finished. A last, annealing sequence has a sort of *bonne bouche* kept back for him by his hostess, a kind of spiritual magnification of the small packet of cakes she wraps for him to take home: on her most recent visit to India, she filmed an 80-year-old court musician, now living in dire poverty. 'But gay! Like a bird. She seems happy about everything . . .' And it is on this deeply wrinkled, merrily singing face that we are now invited to look, to her pure voice that we listen as Cyril Sahib is gently nursed into his things, seen off down the pavement by his Princess. For an extraordinary moment it takes one's mind off their forever irreconcilable experiences of the past, off the separate, lonely rooms to which they are (alike perhaps only in this) about to return, to forms of exile.

Legacy, cleanly directed by Karen Arthur, is another *tour de force*: in effect, a one-hander this time, written and starred in by the American actress, Joan Hotchkis, who first devised it as a play for herself. Her Bissie Hapgood is discovered by a swimming pool at a local sanatorium, watching her gaga mother take a therapeutic bathe. The rightly disconcerting element in this shot is that her mother's naked back seems almost girlish and so sets up an innocent-obscene tremor of vulnerability from the start. Home again, Bissie fiddles with preparations for a dinner party she and her husband (glimpsed, like a diabetic lover and her bed-wetting son, only in memory flash-backs) are to give that evening: a centrepiece, like a giant bird's nest, to be arranged, using her wedding train; the tracking down of a butter knife. One soon realises – as Bissie crackles on (at instants, in a style Dorothy Parker would not have disowned), putting the phone down on a woman friend after some backchat about her Japanese gardener to lie outstretched in her sunken bath and masturbate; frantically searching for some Xmas decorations; making a comic, desperate call to her analyst – that the lady is very deeply disturbed and about to go theatrically round the twist. Which she does, in a slambang finale that has her

railing foul-mouthed against every racial and national group not one hundred per cent WASP: 'I was here first!' she screams. Given her title, Miss Hotchkis – whose performance is pretty astounding – appears to find the origins of Bissie's nuttiness in her mother's involved instructions on the disposal of sanitary towels in girlhood. I believe this as much as I believe the comprehensive rant of the close; but a lot of the piece commands both respect and attention.

No point in lingering over Gianfranco de Bosio's *Moses*, with Burt Lancaster, unless to emit a whistle of surprise that Anthony Burgess was responsible for the English version script. With lines like, 'This present mode of oppression is clearly efficacious' (of killing off the Jews' first-born sons) and 'We have suffered much without a murmur' (after the wretched desert-trekkers have been moaning away for reels), a lesser name seemed likelier. Originally made as a six-part TV series, this 140-minute *Moses* may have made more sense before being concertina'd. An interesting gimmick has Lancaster's voice for God, too: at this unexplored level, gimmick it remains. Three Sunday dates: Third World Film Festival, beginning 2.30 with Ousmane Sembene's *Emittai*, at International Students' House (Great Portland Street tube); Walerian Borowczyk's overheated *Story of Sin* opens a run at The Electric; Charles Frend's 1967 *The Sky-Bike* revived at the ICA, 3 p.m. through March.

Art

Robert Melville

Landscape Mulch

Constable: Paintings, Watercolours and Drawings Tate Gallery

A fascinating essay by Conal Shields, 'Constable and the Critics', follows the preface by Leslie Parris in the exhibition catalogue. These two and Ian Fleming-Williams are the organisers of the show. Parris and Fleming-Williams have, with immense care, compiled the catalogue. I gather from Shields's essay that it is only very recently that anyone has perceived more than a glimmer of the truth about Constable. Curiously enough, he finds more signs of understanding in some early detractors than in the paeans of praise that have followed. I am particularly struck by his approval of the French critic Delécluz who reviewed the Constables exhibited in Paris in 1824:

We read of 'imprecision', of the formal and colouristic disharmony which follows a departure from classical themes. Delécluz was in the right area, though unable to reach a positive conclusion.

And there is no harsh retort to Ruskin's suggestion that crude pictorial recipe stopped Constable grasping the meaning of nature. Shields is surprised that Ruskin was blind to Constable's perceptual innova-

tions, but adds: 'Perhaps his strictures should help us to refine our interpretation'.

I too have found a 'glimmer' in a notice from the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1829) often quoted as a prime example of the depths to which art journalism can fall. It refers to the painter's 'disagreeable custom' of giving his scenes the appearance of having been strewn with chopped hay whilst the paint was still wet, and it has always seemed to me to be a good description of an effect created by the rich paint surface of many of Constable's later works, an effect which I think of as a kind of mulch. But this 'glimmer' is a will-o'-the-wisp because it leads me straight to Dubuffet's pictures of pieces of ground, and all I can say by way of excusing myself is that the art of Dubuffet is at least conceptual. The word appears glancingly in the Constable catalogue, and the organisers of the show are certainly intent upon demonstrating that his art is far from being simply an empirical investigation of reality.

In 1808, when he was 32 and had been living in London for nine years, working up landscape paintings in his lodgings and attending the life classes at the Academy schools, he painted a rather odd picture of superimposed studies of the male nude. There are three figures and a leg which joins no visible torso. Constable has attempted an entanglement of their limbs which results in a weird caricature of intimacy. Between a standing frontal figure and the back view of a seated figure another partly emerges as if it is lying on the lap of the seated one.

A leg of the standing figure straddles the legs of the third, and from the knee downwards has become nightmarishly thin and elongated. It reminds me that one of Constable's friends told him that he should not be too much alone because it made him think 'impertinently'. The painting takes us as close as we are likely to get to what his friend meant by 'impertinence'. His private papers do not yield anything as forthright as the admission in Delacroix' journal which coincidentally follows the notation of a visit to Constable's exhibition in Paris; it reads: 'Great want of sex.'

The catalogue makes use of a great deal of new material, including topographical researches. The recent discovery that the subject of some of his oil studies is East Bergholt Rectory gives them a hitherto unsuspected significance. This is where Maria Bicknell sometimes stayed with her grandfather, and Constable's first little study of it was painted the year before he fell in love with her and entered into a courtship which lasted seven tormented years before she could bring herself to defy her family's opposition to the marriage. The view of the Rectory he painted on 30 September 1810 used to be known as a sunset view, but the

Tate Gallery Publications on Constable: *John Constable: Further Documents and Correspondence* edited by Leslie Parris, Conal Shields and Ian Fleming-Williams £8.00; and *Constable, Landscape Watercolours and Drawings* by Ian Fleming-Williams £8.50.

identification of the subject makes it clear that he was facing east when he painted it. He arose early that day to paint by first light the house in which Maria stayed and the fields they had walked together.

In John Lloyd Fraser's new biography of Constable which makes deft narrational use of many of the published letters (*John Constable 1776-1837: the Man and His Mistress* Hutchinson £6.95) the author quotes a letter from Constable to Maria in 1812:

You know I have succeeded most with my native scenes. They have always charmed me and I hope they always will . . . I have now very distinctly marked out a path for myself.

It was a straight path and in spite of many anxieties about his standing in the profession and endless frustrations he followed it without deviating for several years. The landscapes of this period sustain the vision of a long hot summer in a countryside filled with happy memories of his childhood. They reached a high point of clarity and serenity in *Boat Building* (an afternoon study of his father's boatbuilding yard) and in Boston's *Stour Valley and Dedham Village*, both painted in 1814, probably concurrently. The Boston panorama is a masterpiece of smooth, untroubled painting in which the bright red yokes of a pair of carthorses sing out like the high, clear call of a bird.

The first of the full-size oil sketches for big paintings he exhibited at the Academy was made for his famous *Haywain*. The two paintings hang opposite one another at the

Of course this child was a human being!



A child of about 14 weeks gestation killed under the 1967 Abortion Act. To date, that Act has claimed nearly 1 million victims in the UK.

What else could he (or she) have been ?

A potential human being ? No, he was a potential born child, a potential adult. But he was already *actually* a human being.

Or was he merely 'part of' his mother ? No, he was genetically and organically distinct from her. He was a separate (though not yet separable) human person. Deny that and you fly in the face of modern genetics and embryology.

Whether a woman has an absolute right to control her own body is irrelevant, because it's not her body which gets destroyed in an abortion. It's somebody else's.

An unwanted pregnancy may seem a disaster. The problems may seem enormous.

But a civilised society doesn't solve problems by killing innocent human beings.

It finds the *positive* solution.

Save the Unborn Child



is a non-demoninational non-party-political organisation which says that there is a positive alternative to abortion and will help any girl or woman to find it.

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Telephone 0926 21587

UNBORN CHILDREN ARE PEOPLE

Tate and although there are no radical changes in the composition of the finished version, the astounding intensity of the light effects a total transformation. When one turns away from the sketch to look at the other it's as if a blind has snapped back on to its roller.

Now the show becomes dramatic; the land turns into glittering bog, the wooden posts begin to rot, brickwork starts to crumble, brightness is imposed and freshness is a spatter of white spots. There is a feverish disturbance in the paint which unsettles the scenes depicted, putting them into inexplicable movement. It comes to a head in the full-size sketch for *Hadleigh Castle*. The paint creates a sustained all-over turbulence, and his genius appears to be marvellously out of hand, almost frighteningly beside itself. In the presence of the finished version it looks like a great anarchic jeer at the Academy. But it's the version in which he attempts to slow it down and tidy it up that's 'tortured and tortuous' and unresolved. He once wrote about Nature as if she were a reluctant artist's model who was gradually getting used to him, 'unveiling her beauties with a less fastidious hand'. In the sketch for *Hadleigh Castle* she has finally given in to him. To take up the subtitle of Fraser's biography, she has become his mistress, and land and sky yield themselves without reserve to the vitality of a painted surface. The paint strokes enmesh a convulsive symbol; ironically, the ruined castle is a broken phallus, an image of despair. Some indication of the cause of his despair can be found in the catalogue note. The family got rid of the painting the year after his death and it fetched £3 13s 6d.

Television

Dennis Potter

Bitter Aloes

Facetiousness is often by far the easiest material for shaping a passable aphorism and there is always plenty of this fodder to be had at Cambridge or any other place where the clever and the privileged are given occasional licence to frolic. I enjoyed and admired the first episode of *The Glittering Prizes* on BBC-2 six weeks ago because the bright mimicry of the manner in which it exploited the posturing and simpering inhabitants of the precious enclave was so maliciously assured and accurate that the series seemed likely to grow into something of much larger significance. There was surely an implicit promise that the young people we saw bouncing witty remarks off the old stones were to be shown growing into a world less kindly disposed to such energetic ping-pong and into experiences or beliefs whose turmoils and complexities would demand a higher price for the strawberries. But by the end of the series last week, five episodes and 25 years later, the knowing quips still came lathering to the edge of the tongue with only a

weary and sardonic twist of the lips to indicate that life had taken its usual toll. The world, it seems, is nothing but a gigantic quadrangle and its passions mere shadows of the verbal felicities that are the real point and substance of human endeavour.

Frederic Raphael is far too able a writer not to have intended most of the mocking ironies which so soon overtook and then swamped his leading characters, but the tender love he gave to the central figure, the writer Adam Morris, became all but indistinguishable at times from besotted admiration. As a result the aloof disdain which might best have sustained an account of how Cambridge does indeed turn some of its products into life-long ninnies developed into the kind of complicity which sneaks in the very opposite attitude. A polished expanse of silvered glass was about the only prize which had not been tarished by the time Raphael reached the end of the series, but you cannot see too much out of a mirror when you are kissing it; the impotence and sterility of flashy chatter is a subject which English writers in particular are well equipped to tackle although they are always likely to become too entranced with the sweet anguish, the disease they seek to diagnose, and it is not altogether surprising that the scalpel wielded in *The Glittering Prizes* left behind an iatrogenic infection.

Nine hours and more of entertainment cannot be just written off with this sort of brutality, however. I could not have switched off during any one of the six episodes, for there was a spring and a snap to the dialogue which is rare among the grunts or groans or monosyllabic banalities that so frequently pass for 'naturalism' in many a television series. Always, too, Raphael seemed about to break through into different territory and the reason why he did not or could not was itself an awful source of tension adding to the drama. The acting and direction were continually interesting, and Tom Conti pitched his playing of Adam Morris well beyond the irritations of an actor's desperate mannerisms, giving the part a nervous energy and a vocal athleticism which made one want to watch with the hypnotised stare a victim keeps for its predator. It was a fascinating performance, charged with the same force that crackled in the writing: static electricity, the kind that jolts but never burns.

Writers who beat their breasts about nothing very much are certainly one of the prizes we are entitled to enjoy in a society that does not put its more literate dissidents in labour camps and psychiatric wards. The endearing eagerness with which Adam Morris pounced on the reviews of the novel we had not seen him write or think about implied an understandable weakness for the opinion of others, not a dread about ultimate condemnation or a fear of personal extinction. None of us here who trade words for a living can imagine what sort of person we would be when faced with all the vindictive power of a totalitarian state, so it would be a grotesque indecency to respond to such a figure as Alexander Solzhenitsyn with anything less than proper respect and tension. But it was an uncomfortable and a salutary experience to watch him on Monday's *Panorama* (BBC-1) re-

buking the writers and journalists of the West for throwing away 'their sense of responsibility before history and their own people'. Almost any convenient aphorism, or a whole junior common room full of aimless chatter, seemed to be preferable to such an onerous charge, so terrible was the thought of a 'responsibility' so bitterly won.

Solzhenitsyn did not change expression or smile ingratiatingly or even indicate that he was exchanging some of the coin of our common currency, irony, when insisting that 'my warnings go unheeded, they fall on the ears of the deaf'. While he talked, full of chilling pessimism and accusation, he kept a pen in his fingers as though it was a weapon he dare not sheath. The interviewer, Michael Charlton, introduced him beforehand as someone who 'seems a lonely man, even a driven man', but this was to categorise him in terms that placed him dangerously close to the role the Soviet authorities must hope will become the accepted one – that of an eccentric or even half-deranged prophet, cut off from his fellow men by the force of his own arrogant compulsions.

A writer who can keep such a steady gaze while talking in absolute terms about 'the spirit of the age', or who can insist without any sign of egotism that his own future is inseparably linked with the fate of his country, is indeed one of the most noble and unfamiliar and unsettling species ever to come on to our screens. Pray God we too never have to make words, words, words the very marrow of our bones instead of the marks on the side of the tube of the sixteenth brand of toothpaste now on sale. Facetiousness is also a way of avoiding another's pain, of course . . .

Weekend Competition

No 2402 Set by Tim Hopkins

Auden's *Night mail* sang the praises of the Post Office. Can we have some new poems on any aspect of the PO's work? Not more than 20 lines; entries by 19 March.

Result of No 2399 Set by Spiro Keat
Where are they now? Those Shakespearian characters in 1976.

Report by Blackbird

Pistol's turned bawd in Fleet Street, Shylock is in showbiz, Oberon and Puck are having a wild time on pot ('smokes as eas as the old Woodbine') and Lady M is on the couch; Regan and Goneril are in Women's Lib and Polonius is giving the weather forecast. But it's the box – natural – that has engaged most talent. A five apiece to each entry printed.

No – I'm not prepared to say how much raked off I get per man I enlist for these foreign wars. That's a matter between me and the organisation – question of professional integrity, old boy . . . Well, yes – I *am* the organisation – but the principle's the same . . . Incidentally it is understood that you pick up the bill for this very handsome lunch *plus* the two hundred quid your paper's paying for the interview? Good . . . Waiter – another treble brandy – *pronto* . . . Yes, having a handle *do* still count for something in England . . . Good thing too . . . Far too little attention paid

blood and breeding these days . . . Precisely the kind of qualities that Falstaff Security Services are trying to instil in these young chaps we're sending out to Africa . . .

KIT CARPENTER

Bill Bottom FOC

Right lads. It's eight o'clock, let's 'ave
some order.
Brother Flute, 'ave you checked orf the list?
We're all 'ere then. 'Oo's got the minutes?
Brother Quince, 'as everybody seen 'em?
Are we all agreed?
Correct? I'll sign 'em, then. Nothing
arising? Good!
First there's Mrs Snout as wants to join.
I've been to Branch
As says we can't refuse so I propose we
pass a rule that says,
- I've wrote it dahn - 'No Member of
the Chapel
Shall Wear a Skirt at Any Time.' Seconded?
Ta, Flutey. All in favour? Good. You'll
tell 'er
Snotty, then? Tell her, nothing personal,
but if she'd come,
We'd 'ave the lot in.

JOHN STANLEY

Falstaff

Eamonn wants me on. Yes, but how if Eamonn wants me off when I come on? - how then? Can Eamonn get me a keg? No. Or a bird? No. Or take away a primary chance? No. Eamonn hath no skill in treating social diseases, then? No. What is Eamonn? A star. What maketh him to shine? An autocue. *This Is Your Life* - who watches it? He that hath naught else to do o'Wednesday. Do we need it? No. Can we bear it? No. It is mindless crap, then? Yea, to all but the dead. But will it not entertain the living? No. Why? Self-respect will not suffer it. Therefore I'll none of it; Eamonn is a pain in the arse; and so ends my contract.

F. R. VESS

What Fortinbras Told Robin Day

Denmark's a prison! I soon handed it over to Voltimand and went back to sharking. For years now I've been sharking up lists of lawless resolute in the skirts of Syria, Abyssinia, Angola. Enormous fun.

Yes, of course, one can't forget those fantastic iambs, 'The soldier's music and the rites of war.' In Famagusta I met a predecessor of Makarios, a Moroccan who later throttled his wife. He loved all that too. Dif-

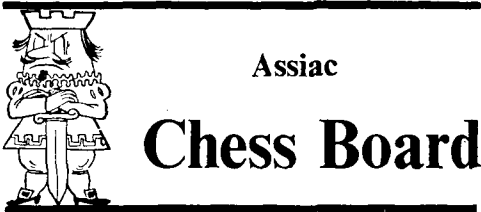
ferent now. There can't be much pride and pomp in giving electric shocks to tits and testicles. Ask Carlos, the Baader-Meinhof, the Chileans.

Myself, I'm a Luther man. Did you know Hamlet met him in Wittenberg? According to Horatio, they used to sit up all night arguing with Doctor Faustus.

LIONEL MILLARD

Of course we have a good thing going, Jess, Bassanio and I, but I do wish Antonio wouldn't quite crowd us so. He's welcome here at Belmont any time, But does he have to keep Bassanio Down here all night, when I've gone up to bed, Playing backgammon? God forbid that I Should bitch about poor Tony - he's a dear But why can't I go with Bassanio To Venice for a change? Antonio's pad Would put up both of us - and the au pair: But *they* must be alone! What do you think?

MAY DAY



Assiac

Chess Board

No 1372 **Knock-Knock**

Knock again and the next one may well be the knock-out, such as in Schweber-Quinteros, Buenos Aires 1969. /r4rk1/5p2/plb1pQpQ/8/1B2P3/2K1R4/PPP3PP/1K6/ The first hard knock **Ktd5!ed**: (What else?); second knock **Rh3,Qg7**; third knock **Bc3!**, and rather than . . . d4 he might as well have let them count him out instead of waiting for Bd4:, unanswerable k.o.

Now here (reported by Mathias Gerusel in his *Schach-Echo* column) we see Tat dishing out three initial hefty knocks; White against Gurgendise 1969. /r3rbkl/2q2p1p/2p1p1p1/pp1ktP1B1/6Q1/P2B2P1/1PP2PK1/R6R/.
1) **Rh7:1,Qe5:1** Only chance since . . . Kh7: is punished by 2) **Rh1t,Kg8**; 3) **Bf6,Ktf6**; 4) **ef**; **Qe5**; 5) **Bg6:1,Qf6**; 6) **Bh7t,Kh8**; 7) **Qg8t**; 2) **Rf7:1,Kf7**; 3) **Bg6:t!** Knock No. 3, and obviously to take the brash Bishop would cost the Queen, **Kg8**; 4) **Be8**; **Bg7**; 5) **Bd7,Ktc7**; 6) **Bc6**: A couple of pawns the net result, so far, of all this noisy knock-about, but surely Black is left with an untenable position, **Rf8**; 7) **Rd1,Qc5**; 8) **Bf3,Qc2**; 9) **Rd7,Rf7**;

10) **Rd8t,Rf8**; 11) **Bf6l,Qh7**; 12) **Be4l,Qh6**; 13) **Bg5,Qh8**; 14) **Rd7**, final knock since after . . . **Rf7** 15) **Rc7**: is unanswerable.

Now here (Sokolsky-Kotov, Moscow 1949) the Black King gets painfully knocked in the chest as well as in the back. /1R3b2/3r3k/2p1bp1p/r1q1pKtpQ/2Pp2P/6B1/P4PP1/1R4K1/.
1) **Kth6:1,Bh6**; 2) **Rh8t!l,Kh8**; 3) **Qh6:t,Rh7**; 4) **Qf6:t,Rg7**; 5) **Rb7**, etc, whereas 4) . . . **Kg8** fails against 5) **Rb8t**.

In Niephaus-P. Schmidt 1950 we can, once again, see a sacrificial Knight knocking open the vital diagonal. /2rq1rk1/pp2p1b1/2ktp4/5b2/4pP2/1PKt1B3/PP1QB3/2K3RR/.
1) **Bc4t,e6**; 2) **Qh2! Thr.:Qh8t, Qf6**; 3) **Ktd5l,ed**; 4) **Bd5:t,Be6**; 5) **Be6:t,Qe6**; 6) **Rg7:t,Kg7**; 7) **Qh7t,Kf6**; 8) **Rh6t**!

Finally (Sax-Kestler in the 1974 Olympiad at Nice) a tit-for-tat scramble, but Black comes first. /r1b1k3/2q1ppb1/2p2kt2/3p1PBB/2ktP3P/Pp5Kt/1P2Q1P1/2KR3R/.
1) . . . **Ra3:l!** This hard knock can't be dodged since 2) **Kb1** leads to . . . **Ra1t!** followed by . . . **Qa5t** and speedy mate; 2) **ba:Qa5**; 3) **Rd3, Qa3:t**; 4) **Kb1,Bf5**; 5) **Ktf2,b2**; 6) **Bf7:t** Desperation but g4 would fail against . . . **Qb3** and . . . **Kta3t**, **Kf7**; 7) **Bf6,Qa1t**; 8) **Kc2,b1=Q1t**; 9) **Rb1**!, **Qa2t**; and White loses the Queen.

Very much in tune with the theme song the 4-pointer for beginners is a game position in which one very hard knock forced Black's immediate resignation. For 6 ladder-points **B** takes 12 moves to achieve the mate, but it is really child's play with the obvious hint that this is a very early example of the 'ladder' theme, the Queen climbing and finally swooping. **C** (for 7) is a delightful miniature, White's clever fugitive Knight forcing the draw after seven moves. Usual prizes, entries by 15 March.

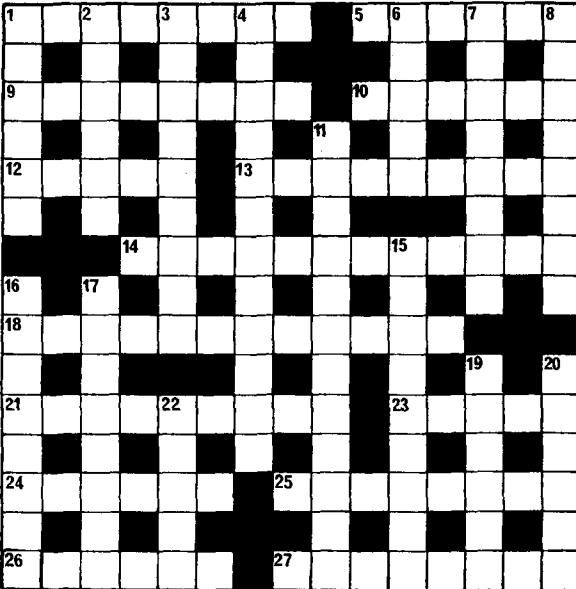
A: Uhlmann-Schwartz 1975: /2r2rk1/pp1bqp p1/2ktppkt1p/2p3Kt1/1bP5/1PKt3P1/PBQPPP BP/3R1RK1/.
B: S. R. Barrett 1874: /48/ppQKPPP1/k7/.
C: T. B. Gorgiev 1929: /5b1Kt/16/5k2/K1P1kt3/24/.

Report on No 1369 *Set 13 February*
A: 23) . . . **Qf2:l!** And now 24) **Qb3**: is ruled out by . . . **hg:t** & . . . **Bh3**:; whereas 24) **gh**: is simply countered by . . . **Kta1**; 25) **Qa1:t,Qf4**; etc. The actual sequel was 24) **Ra2,Qg3**; 25) **Kh1, Qc3**; 26) **Ra3,Bh3**; etc.
B: 1) **d7l,Qf8**; 2) **Re8l,Kte8**; 3) **Bg5t!l,Kf7**; 4) **d8=Ktft**, Or 3) . . . **Kg5**; 4) **fe=Q,Qh6t**; 5) **Kg8**, and there will be a second White Lady.
C: 1) **Ktc3t,Kb2**; 2) **Qa2t!l,Kc1!** (**Kc3:??**); 3) **Qb1t,Kd2**; 4) **Qd1t,Kc3**; 5) **Ktd5t,Ke4**; 6) **Qf3t!l, Kf3**; 7) **Kt5f**!, Alternatively loss of Queen.

Many plaudits for **C**. Prizes: G. Abrahams, E. Allan, M. E. Burn, G. W. Richardson, J. D. Taylor. *Stop Press jubilation: Tony Miles; G.M.* So well deserved, and *vivant sequentes!*

Weekend Crossword 1154

PRIZES: Book tokens of £2 for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1154, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 16 Mar.



- ACROSS
1. Knight who makes one count up foreign arms (8).
 5. Deity for whom an essential point exists (6).
 9. The likeness would sound inferior if one characteristic were omitted (8).
 10. Saint who needs one to make a drink (6).
 12. The yarn in full is less amusing (5).
 13. Start training with a philosopher - that is what is needed for marriage (9).
 14. Imbroglio which may be made plain to comic (12).
 18. N. American spectacle which returns once more before the sun goes down (7, 5).
 21. Nell embraces her mate, confused by the attention (9).
 23. Food for a much admired person (5).
 24. Prepared to eat something greasy in bed (6).
 25. Pennant displayed when a vessel is outside the river (8).
 26. Town discovered three times on one river (6).

27. If the state went a little short, it would have to know about food (8).
- DOWN
1. A fast animal does the reverse of a circuit on the motorway (6).
 2. 'That — which men miscall delight' (Shelley) (6).
 3. Wildly in love, be carnal here (9).
 4. Dramatist who shows the stars are about to put an end to a dynasty (12).
 6. Approaches, putting one organ inside another (5).
 7. Descending from the sublime, give a graduate less than the credit (8).
 8. 'Dance, and Provencal song, and — mirth!' (Keats) (8).
 11. The acts and tune of it combine to make an opera (4, 3, 5).
 15. Ground transferred to tall men (9).
 16. A town without capital is liable to collapse (8).
 17. Where to serve a mean course (8).

19. River animal rises to the surface (6).
20. Bright but black after a second (5).
22. Subject of autobiography? (5).

SET SQUARE

Solution to No 1152

T	U	R	N	K	E	Y	S	D	E	C	A	M	P
R	O	I	O	T	A	G	I						
A	B	U	N	D	A	N	C	E		G	R	A	I
M	N	N	G	M	E	M	A						
P	A	D	U	A		E	X	P	O	R	T	E	R
S		P		T		M	T						
S													
H	P	E	N	R	W	O	R						
H	O	I	E	N									
L	I		R	E									
D	E	F	E	R	E	N	T						
A	T	E	A	A	I	H	G						
L	A	I	R	S									
L	N	I	E	K	G	T	E						
S	I	G	H	T	S								
P	A	S	S										
W	O	R	D										

Prizewinners to No 1152

R. E. Bell (London NW8)
Miss E. M. Tibbits
(St Leonards)
J. H. Bentley (Leeds)

APPOINTMENTS



**Islington
Environmental
Health**

Centre Manager

(Male or Female)

required for a new Consumer Advice Centre to be opened in Seven Sisters Road, N7.

The Centre Manager will have responsibility for the development and administration of the Centre. The successful candidate must have previous experience in dealing with the public, the achievement of a good level of education, administrative ability and must be able to work cheerfully and calmly under pressure. Training will be given if required.

**Salary scale S.O.1 (£4,620 - £4,926 inclusive)
35 hour week spread over Tuesday to Saturday.**

Application forms and full details from Chief Environmental Health Officer, 159/167 Upper Street, London N1 1RE (Tel: 01-226 4488 Ext. 291). Quote Ref. No. 864. Closing date 19 March 1976.

THE LABOUR PARTY

has a vacancy for a

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

based in London

(Salary scale £2,750, rising to £3,995 p.a.)

Applicants should have an interest in and preferably some knowledge of economic and/or social policy issues. An Honours Degree, though not essential, would be an advantage. The successful applicant would be required to take up the post early in May.

and for a

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

based in Glasgow

(Salary scale £2,350, rising to £3,595 p.a.)

Applicants should have a wide interest in and some knowledge of industrial, social and political affairs in Scotland. The work involves preparation of research policy and other papers for the Scottish Council. An Honours Degree and some research experience, though not essential, would be an advantage. The successful applicant would be required to take up the post early in May.

Application forms (please indicate for which post) and conditions of employment can be obtained from:

**The Administrative Officer,
The Labour Party,
Transport House,
Smith Square,
London SW1P 3JA.
Telephone: 01-834 9434**

Completed application forms should be returned no later than Friday, 19 March 1976.

RESEARCH OFFICER

A vacancy exists in the Research Department for a Research Officer to specialise in the fields of corporate and public finance, and who has detailed knowledge of, or interest in U.K. financial institutions. The successful candidate will be required to prepare briefing documents and background papers on a wide range of issues including pensions, for use by union representatives at all levels of the union. In addition the appointee will be required to contribute to the wider programme of work carried out by the Research Department.

Applications are therefore invited from persons with appropriate qualifications in economics or related disciplines, or with relevant experience. The commencing salary will be £3,040 rising by four annual increments to £3,540. The appointee will be required to join the Officials and Staff Superannuation Fund.

Further details are available on request. Completed application forms, available from the General Secretary, should be returned no later than first post on Friday, 19 March 1976 to:



**ROY GRANTHAM
General Secretary
APEX
22 Worple Road
Wimbledon
London SW19 4DF.**

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND AUSTRALIA

J. D. STORY CHAIR OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The University invites applications for the J. D. Story Chair of Public Administration within the Department of Government, vacant following the resignation of Professor K. W. Knight. Applicants should have high academic qualifications and appropriate experience.

The salary for a Professor is \$A24,394 per annum and the University provides prescribed travelling and removal expenses, superannuation, study leave and housing assistance.

Additional information and application forms are obtainable from the Association of Commonwealth Universities (Appts), 36 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PF.

Applications close on 30 April 1976.

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK LECTURESHIPS IN CANADIAN, CARIBBEAN OR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

Applications are invited for two Lectureships in Canadian, Caribbean or Latin American Studies in the Department of History, tenable from 1 October 1976. Applications will be welcomed from those whose research interests are in one or more of the fields mentioned. The Lecturers will teach in the Department of History and in the inter-disciplinary School of Comparative American Studies.

Initial salary will be within the first four points of the Lecturer scale £3,174 x £204 — (£3,786) — £6,234, £6,446 p.a.

Further particulars and application forms quoting Ref. No.: 29/2F/76 from the Academic Registrar, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL.

Closing date for receipt of applications 26 March 1976.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL SERVICES

LIAISON ASSISTANT
£2,910 - £3,234

required to work within the small but lively Research & Development Group of the directorate. Duties involve information gathering and dissemination. Production of the departmental bulletin, and running its library, are amongst the duties involved.

Experience or knowledge of social services or library/information work is essential.

Informal inquiries to Michael Layzell on 01-980 4422.

Application form from Management Services Department, Town Hall, Patriot Square, London E2 9LN or telephone 01-981 0077 any time, quoting reference 6/42.

Closing date 22 March.

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

SOCIAL SERVICES

FIRST AID — HOUSE
MANAGER/MANAGERESS

Up to £2,193 plus accommodation.

First-Aid provides an information and advisory service and crisis accommodation for young people in the Doncaster area. We are looking for someone with a flexible, confident approach to young people and the difficulties they face, to be responsible for house maintenance, keeping good relations with other agencies and giving personal support to residents. Informal inquiries to the Project Director, Damian Killeen (tel. 0303 21918).

Application forms are obtainable from: The Chief Executive (Personnel Section), Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, 1 Priory Place, Doncaster DN1 1BN. Telephone: Doncaster (0302) 20321.

Closing date for applications 19 March.

NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS

invites applications for the post of

Regional Organiser

to be based in Scotland

The starting salary will be £4,430 with three annual increments and annual review.

Application forms (to be returned by 5 April) and further details from:-

**The General Secretary (R.O.),
National Union of Journalists,
Acorn House,
314 Gray's Inn Road,
London WC1X 8DP.**

NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS

invites applications for the post of

Education and Research Officer

to be based in London

The starting salary will be £4,990 with three annual increments and annual review.

Application forms (to be returned by 5 April) and further details from:-

**The General Secretary (E.O.),
National Union of Journalists,
Acorn House,
314 Gray's Inn Road,
London WC1X 8DP.**

£4,000**HOLLOWAY TENANT CO-OPERATIVE**
requires
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

to set up a half million pound housing programme.
Further information: ring 263 0761 or apply to Tricia Dahan, 107 Tollington Way, London N7.

NATIONAL UNION OF BANK EMPLOYEES

require a

Shorthand Typist

to look after three organisers. Salary approx. £2,530 per annum plus LVs, 4 weeks holiday. Interesting position.

Apply:

Mrs Cadney,
NUBE
35 Cophall Avenue,
London EC2
01-628 0227

POOLES PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD CO-OPERATIVE

is a tenant run Housing Association leasing houses from the GLC and employing an established local housing association to convert them.

We require a second full time worker to organise our office procedures and to co-ordinate administrative/liaison work involved in the improvement programme in a way which is responsive to tenants' wishes.

Organisational / administrative abilities vital, housing experience would help. Salary £3,000 ish. S.a.e. for full job description. Contact: Alison McLean, 386 Hornsey Road, N.19. 01-263 0227.

**UNIVERSITY OF REGINA
Regina, Saskatchewan,
Canada.**

has an opening for a

FACULTY POSITION

in the

HUMAN JUSTICE SERVICES PROGRAM

The successful candidate will assist in developing a program of research and instruction for students with varied experimental and academic backgrounds, leading to a certificate and/or degree. The proposed program is flexible, but it is anticipated that it will relate to people's perception of formal and informal justice systems, and the interaction of these perceptions with the community, police, court, correctional and rehabilitative programs. Emphasis will be placed on an experimental and research approach. There will also be an applied dimension in the program. Teaching and research in the program will be a major responsibility.

QUALIFICATIONS:

An academic background with considerable appropriate experience. Canadian experience preferred.

SALARY:

Commensurate with education and experience.

Range:

\$14,540-\$21,083 (Assistant Professor)
\$19,083-\$26,963 (Associate Professor)

CLOSING DATE:

As soon as appropriate candidates are available.

SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO:

Otto H. Driedger, Director,
Human Justice Services Program,
University of Regina,
Campion College, East Podium,
Regina, Saskatchewan,
Canada, S4S 0A2.
Phone: 584-4776. Area Code 306.

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

Applications are invited for the following posts in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences:

PROFESSOR/READER/SENIOR LECTURER/LECTURER IN DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STUDIES (2 posts).

Candidates for one of these posts, a specialist interest in Southern and Central Africa would be an advantage. For the other, a specialist interest in either Rural Development Administration or Public Enterprise, would be an advantage.

Salary scales: Professor K7,400 - K7,800 p.a. Reader K6,800 p.a. Senior Lecturer K5,600 - K6,600 p.a. Lecturer K4,000 - K5,400 p.a. (£1 sterling = K1.28). The British Government may supplement salaries in range £1,230 - £2,352 p.a. (sterling) for married appointees or £276 - £1,152 p.a. (sterling) for single appointees (normally free of all tax) and provide children's education allowances and holiday visit passages. Family passages; various allowances; superannuation and medical aid schemes; regular overseas leave.

Detailed applications (2 copies) including a curriculum vitae and naming 3 referees, should be sent by air mail, not later than 25 March 1976, to the Registrar, University of Zambia, PO Box 2379, Lusaka, Zambia. Applicants resident in UK should also send 1 copy to the Inter-University Council, 90-91 Tottenham Court Road, London W1P 0DT. Further particulars may be obtained from either address.

STELLA FISHER: The number of employers in central London looking for skilled office staff belies the national unemployment figures generally. Please call or write for details of jobs now on our books for which your skills may be right. Stella Fisher Bureau, 110 Strand, WC2. 01-836 6644.

ART GALLERY ASSISTANT required end of March to work afternoons, Mon.-Fri. in small gallery off Holborn. Typing essential. Apply Ganymed Gallery, 11 Great Turnstile, WC1. 405 9836.

RESIDENT SENIOR HOUSEPARENT, required April or September, care of small group autistic children. Home Office salary scale, school holidays and weekends free. Only qualified applicants considered. Inquiries: Principal, Helen Allison School, 29 Overcliffe, Gravesend, Kent.

GENERAL OFFICE HELP required, knowledge typing and French useful but not essential. Full or part-time. H. A. Percheron Ltd. 01-580 1192.

PART-TIME ASSISTANT SECRETARY required to act as assistant to Administrative Secretary of an Institute concerned with science and technology situated London EC1. Shorthand-typing and businesslike personality essential. Hours reasonably flexible. Please state experience, remuneration expected and phone number. Box 3309.

FOR SECRETARIAL POSTS with a Social Service bias. Charities etc, why not contact Covent Garden Bureau, 53 Fleet Street, London EC4. 01-353 7696.

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Studentships**UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER**

Applications are invited from graduates or those expecting to graduate in 1976 for

RESEARCH STUDENTSHIPS

in the Faculties of

ARTS & ECONOMIC & SOCIAL STUDIES

Values as for state studentships; one year awards, renewable in some cases. Particulars and application forms (returnable by 1 June) from the Registrar, The University, Manchester, M13 9PL.

Quote ref: 29/76/NS and Faculty in which award is to be held.

**Appointments
Wanted**

FIRST-CLASS LSE HONS GRAD seeks temp. work - research, admin. Box 3297.
LITERATE Economics grad. sks interesting work till summer, maybe longer. Box 2989.

Publications

SUBVERSION? ANARCHY? For a rational commentary read the Cienfuegos Press Review of Anarchist Literature, 1976. Articles and reviews include: Who is Brutal? Self-Management in the Spanish Revolution. Spain, Bakunin Russia, The Angry Brigade etc. send 30p. (+ 10p. p.&p.) to Cienfuegos Press Ltd., Box A, 1 Exchange, Honley, Nr Huddersfield, HD7 2AY.

SALE! SALE! SALE! Hundreds of unrepeatable book bargains. Sale ends Saturday 6 March. Collet's London Bookshop, 64/66 Charing Cross Rd. WC2H 0BD.

OUTPOSTS. Poems invited for future issues. S.a.e. to Howard Sergeant, 72 Burwood Rd. Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 4AL.

POETRY DIMENSION ANNUAL 3 eds. Dannie Absc, incl. Basil Bunting's 'Yeats Recollected'; Carlos Baker on Pound in Venice; Spender on Muir; Irving Howe on Sylvia Plath. Poems by Larkin, Hughes, Betjeman and many others. Paperback (223 pages) £1.60 from bookshops or £1.75 (incl. p.&p.) from Robson Books, 28 Poland Street, London W1.

GET YOUR OWN COPY OF 'The Leveller' the new radical examiner owned and controlled by its readers. Pilot issue in Political Police, Workers' Cooperatives, Special Air Service, Angola, Football and Reggae. Price 40p. (inc. postage) from: 91 Grove Lane, Camberwell, London SE5 8SN.

WORLD HISTORY. Books bought & catalogues issued on most areas. A. C. Hall, 30 Staines Road, Twickenham, Middx.

REVIEW COPIES. We are large buyers of review copies and of collections of books in the condition on all subjects, including quality paperbacks. R. A. Boon, Book-sellers, 348 Upper St. N1. 01-359 1196. Open daily incl. Sat. 9.30 a.m.-5.30 p.m.

SECONDHAND Fiction and Biography, also new books at reduced prices, all at World of Books, 30 Sackville Street, London W1.

Personal**LEBANON
DIRECT RELIEF**

100,000 innocent people are homeless in cold weather. £2 will feed a family for one week. We guarantee that every penny given will be converted into food and given to certified needy families within two weeks of receipt, through experienced welfare workers, without any loss or deduction for administration. We have already sent £10,000 but more help is desperately needed. Help is given on basis of need only, without regard to race or religion.

Send your gift please to the Rev. Dr I. Morgan, Lebanon Direct Relief Fund, Bible Lands Society The Old Kiln, High Wycombe, Bucks. (Est. 1854).

TUSCANY. Really nice house, beautiful mountain village nr Lucca (5 dble bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, etc.) £150-£300 p.m. facpucci, via Francesi, 55026 Bagni di Lucca Fornoil.

DONALD. I'm not sure (any more), but hope to be there. Priscilla.

CAN YOU COPE with the demanding pressures of community? Join us for 6-12 months as a volunteer in our houses for single, homeless people. Contact: Jane Hoad, The Cyrenians Ltd, 13 Wincheap, Canterbury, Kent CT1 3TB.

SPAIN. 'Au pair' girl wanted, Spanish bi-lingual family, help with three young children. Write Gasco, Avenida General Maza 17, Alicante, Spain.

CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD. Young men (RC) who would like to consider the priesthood are invited without obligation, to spend the solemn days of Holy Week in a friendly retreat atmosphere. Details: GVC Secretary, Allington Castle, Maidstone, Kent.

VISION CORRECTED. Sight improved without glasses. Qualified Bates practitioner, Michael Ronan, 39 Smith Street, London SW3. 935 9847.

ISRAEL KIBBUTZ schemes. For details send s.a.e. to Project 67 (NS), 21 Little Russell Street, WC1. Tel. 01-242 3506.

SLEEP - GLORIOUS SLEEP with Kila Ear Plugs 75p pkt incl. p & p. Svedmed, 15 Church St. Weybridge, Surrey, KT13 8DE.

PSYCHOANALYST. 32 Nevill Place, London SW5. Appointments per post.

ASSOC. FOR GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL Psychotherapy offers psychotherapy sessions. Arrangements for those with lower income. Initial interview. Box 3195.

JOIN GROUP looking at methods in psychoanalytically based group therapy led by experienced psychotherapist (formerly at a London teaching hospital). 01-748 1094, 10.30 to 6.0; 01-769 0506 after 7.30 p.m.

PHILIP HUMPHREYS, psychologist, formerly of Princes Gate. Now at Richmond. Phone 940 4416.

LADY. 39, enjoys visiting London, would like to meet someone whose interests include National Theatre & music. Box 3254.

EX-LADY TEACHER, cultured, Continental origin, seeks friendship intelligent, sensitive people (45-60). Box 3268.

FREE friendship scheme, helpful articles. 40p. 'New Life' (NS), 37 Melrose Avenue, London SW16.

MINI-TYCOON (5' 3"), Jewish, non-orthodox, offers the best of everything to a petite, attractive and intelligent lady between 28 and 34 years of age. Must be capable of sharing business and social life of well-established and successful man with wide interests here and abroad. Daily kept, car available. Absolute necessities, no ties whatsoever, unshakable loyalty, accomplished hostess, ability to deal with people at all levels. Tel. no. appreciated. Box 3186.

LECTURER (48), plans unconventional camping hol. Black Sea (other areas, e.g. Balaton, considered). Seeks f. comp. (30s). No strings either way. Box 3251.

UNIV. WOMAN with 2 children and interesting career, would like to meet cheerful, musical, intellectual man, 37-47, London or East Anglia. Correspond first. Box 3283.

INTELLECTUAL, gregarious, informal f. (60) with a demanding job in London, would like to hear in some detail, from emotionally stable, intellectual m. (under 64), car-driver, who would welcome the challenge of a shared, outward-looking future, based on mutual respect, tolerance, concern. Interested: lit., theatre, visual arts, home life, travel. Box 3248.

WELL EDUCATED man, aged 45, wishes to meet kind, sincere woman, 30-45, living S. London, Kent or Sussex. Box 3258.

WRITER, fifties, tall, slim, good-looking, great sense of humour, seeks charming, sophisticated woman. Box 3216.

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NEW STATESMAN

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Theatres

CITIZENS' THEATRE, Gorbals, Glasgow, presents Citizens' Theatre Company in 'Woyzeck' by Büchner. 041-429 0022.

EMBASSY THEATRE, Swiss Cottage, 'All My Sons', 10, 11, 12 March at 7.30. 'A Penny for a Song', 17, 18, 19 at 7.30. Box Office open 2-6 p.m. Tel. 722 8186.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE, 722 9301. Eves at 8. Sats at 5 & 8. 'You'll Never be Michelangelo', a comedy by Roger Milner, until 13 March. Prices 90p & £1.50.

IPSWICH THEATRE, 0473-53725. 10-27 March. 'Hamlet', with Giles Block, Hazel Douglas, Richard Mayes. Sponsored by Northgate Schools Foundation.

NEW END, 435 4116 (Hampstead Tube). 'Wild Orchids' by Frank White, 8 p.m. nightly (except Mon.). Ends 14 March.

ROYAL COURT, 730 1745. Eves 8. Sats 5 & 8.30. James Bolam, Jane Asher & Stephen Moore in Christopher Hampton's play 'Treats'. 'Sensational... S.T. 'Very funny... Observer.

THEATRE ROYAL, WINDSOR, 95 61107. 'Murder with Love', a new thriller by Francis Durbridge.

Exhibitions



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Shaw Theatre, 100 Euston Road, NW1, 8 March-8 April 9.30-8 p.m. Monday to Saturday. Admission free.

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Entertainments

THIRD WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, Sun. 7 Mar. 2.30-10 p.m. International Students' House, 1 Park Crescent, W1 (Gt. Portland St. Tube). Main Feature: 2.30 'Emital', 8.30 'Ramparts of Clay', + Andrew Salkey. Poet and Broadcaster. Tickets 75p. The Haslemere Group. Tel: 637 9939 (day), 405 7277 (eve).

Poetry

NATIONAL POETRY CENTRE, 21 Earl's Court Sq., SW5. 5 March contd on Sat. Children's Festival Weekend. Sessions on Friday at 7.30 and Sat. at 3.30 and 7.30 p.m. 12 March, 8. Catling and Michael Haslam read from their own works (There will also be an exhibition of B. Catling's art work). Starts 7.30 p.m.

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Meetings

HUBERT BEUVE-MERY, fondateur du 'Monde', Président du Centre de formation et perfectionnement des journalistes, will give a lecture on 'Libertés et responsabilités du journaliste' on Tuesday 9 March at 6.15 p.m. at the French Institute, Queensberry Place, London SW7. Tel: 01-589 6211 ext. 38. Admission free.

THE YOUNG FABIAN GROUP, Michael Meacher MP, a Minister at the DHSS. Tues. 9 March 7.30 onwards. All welcome. 11 Dartmouth St, SW1.

ARGENTINA - repression and resistance - public meeting to launch Argentina Support Movement, with recent colour film in English; and open discussion led by Stan Thorne MP and panel including Argentinian lawyer, recently released political prisoner, and Christopher Roper. Thursday, 11 March, 7 p.m., New Theatre, LSE, Houghton Street, WC1.

AFRICA CENTRE, Master and servant in a colonial novel. Dr Ben Obumelu discusses stereotypes in Joyce Carey's novel 'Mr Johnson'. Wed. 10 March 6.30. Adm. 40p, students 25p. 38 King St, WC2. 836 1973.

YOUNG MAPAM, 'Private Medicine and the National Health Service'. To discuss this and other aspects of the NHS, come along and take part in a discussion led by a panel of doctors and health workers at 37 Broadhurst Gardens, NW6 (Nearest tube Finchley Rd), on Sun. 7 March at 8 p.m. All welcome.

BUDDHIST ART & ICONOGRAPHY: illustrated talk by Dr Chandra Wickramagamage. Sunday 7 March 4.30 p.m. The Meeting House, 120 Heath Street, Hampstead. British Buddhist Association. 242 5538 (wkdays) 388 4589 (weekend).

THEOSOPHY, Public Talk & Questions. Sun. 8 Mar. 8 p.m. Free. 'Reincarnation Explained'. S.a.e. for programme, book lists & literature. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

THEODOR HERZL SOCIETY, & Lond. University (E.-M. Dept), 57 Eton Ave, NW3. 8.15 p.m. Tuesday, 9 March 'History of the Holy Land'. Dr K. Cragg & Dr M. Gertner: 'Muslims, Crusaders & Mystics - Faith, Land & Power'.

'NATURAL LAW AND LAND': Anthony Deavin. Sun. 7 March 11 a.m. Tuesday Discussion on theme 'Grounds for Hope' Tues. 9 March 7 p.m. 'The Tide of Devolution': Peter Cadogan. South Place Ethical Society, Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Sq., London WC1. 01-242 8032/3.

BUDDHIST SOCIETY, 58 Eccleston Square, London SW1. Sat. 6 March 3 p.m. 'Open Day'. Tues. 9 March 6.30 p.m. 'Introducing Buddhism'. Wed. 10 March 6.30 p.m. - 'Mahayana Buddhism' & 'Theravada Buddhism' - two separate Study & Discussion Groups. All welcome. Send s.a.e. for full programme.

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New Theatre,

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